

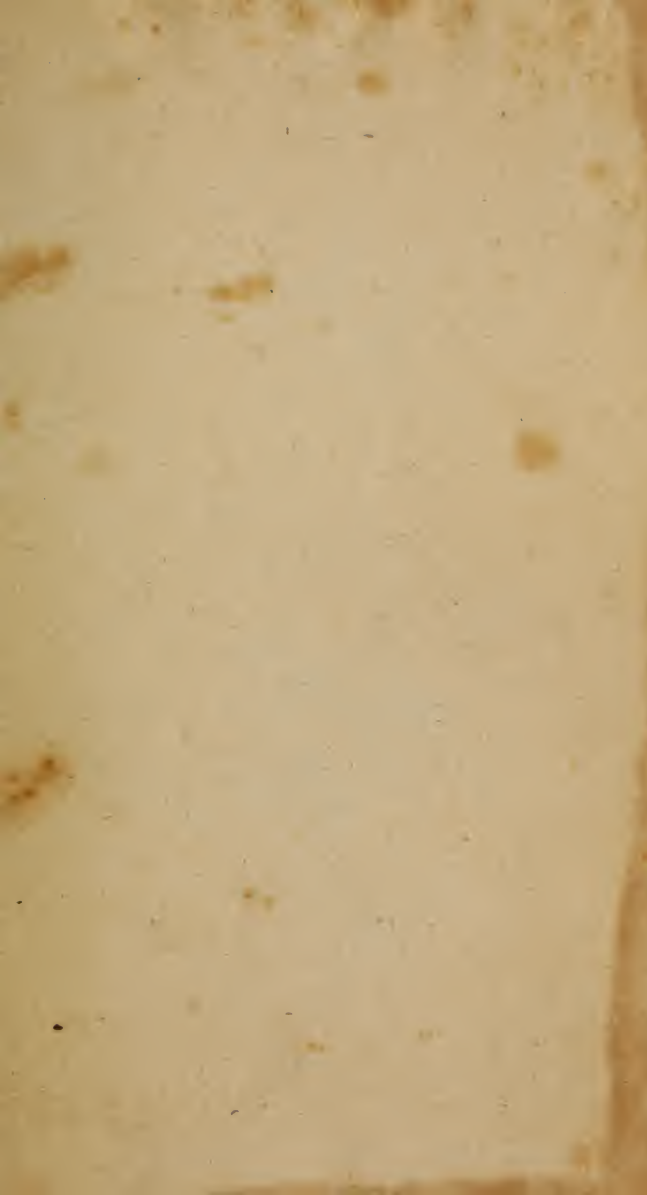


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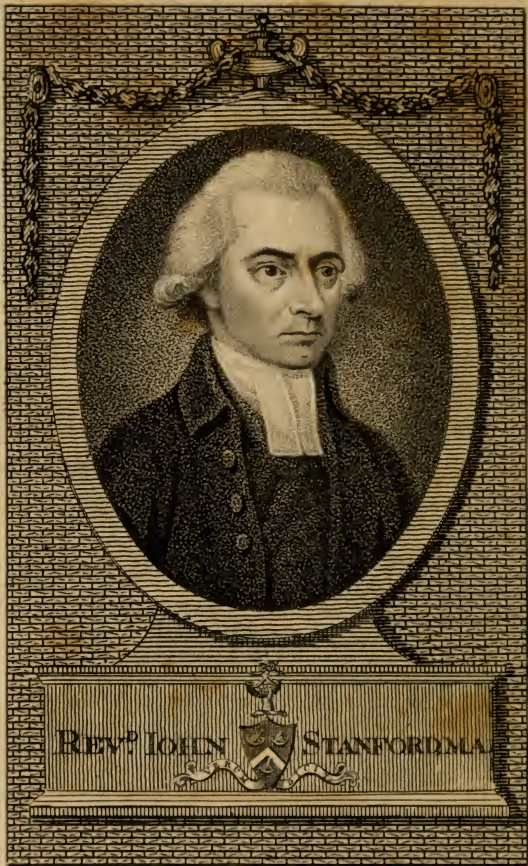




THE  
DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN.



W.B. (copy)  
18 Ridge



*From a portrait by Sir J. Smith*

*Printed by J. Smith*



*W. B. Crosby*  
THE  
DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN:

BEING  
FIFTY-TWO SHORT LECTURES,  
WITH  
APPROPRIATE HYMNS,  
ON THE  
MOST INTERESTING SUBJECTS,  
FOR  
EVERY LORD'S DAY IN THE YEAR.

DESIGNED FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF FAMILIES OF EVERY  
CHRISTIAN DENOMINATION.

✓  
BY JOHN STANFORD, M. A.

---

As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.  
JOSHUA.

---

New-York:

Printed and sold by *T. & J. Swords*, No. 160 Pearl-street;  
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1806.



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BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of August, in the thirty-first year of the Independence of the United States of America, JOHN STANFORD, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as Author, in the words following, to wit: "*The Domestic Chaplain: being fifty-two short Lectures, with appropriate Hymns, on the most interesting Subjects, for every Lord's Day in the Year. Designed for the Improvement of Families of every Christian Denomination. By John Stanford, M.A. 'As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.' Joshua.*"

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies, during the Times therein mentioned;" and also to an Act, entitled, "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies, during the Times therein mentioned, and extending the Benefits thereof to the Arts of Designing, Engraving, and Etching Historical and other Prints."

EDWARD DUNSCOMB,

*Clerk of the District of New-York.*



## ADDRESS.

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ALTHOUGH the title affixed to this volume of Lectures be sufficient to express the use for which they are principally designed, it may not be unnecessary to explain the motives which induced their publication. It was not a love of novelty in divinity; for, as our Lord hath said, *No man having drank old wine straightway desireth new; for, he saith, the old is better.* Nor was it from a wish to court the applause of the learned; for I have studied that simplicity of style which best suits the mixed capacities usually found in domestic circles. But, my aim is to be useful in promoting the moral interest of families, by disseminating some of the most important truths of the Gospel, in an agreeable variety, without regard to those perplexing controversies too prevalent among professors of Christianity. I have also in view, the assistance of congregations and societies in the country, who are frequently destitute of stated Ministers; presuming this volume, in the

hand of a good reader, may be the means of securing the attendance of the people, and promoting their instruction. From a pretty general acquaintance with mankind, I am confident that the respectability of any community depends on the virtue of the families of which it is composed. I am equally confident, that domestic life is capable of producing very great sources of disquietude, or of enjoying a very high degree of happiness.—That the Gospel of Christ is calculated to correct improper habits, and afford consolation under sufferings, and that it enjoins duties productive of good order and real pleasure, is disputed by none who are acquainted with its divine precepts. For these reasons I have constructed my Lectures in that form, and under that title, which I presumed would be best calculated to make their way into Christian families of different denominations; and, under the benediction of the Almighty, contribute, in some small degree, to the valuable fund of personal and social improvement. Infallibility is not the prerogative of man. I know, as an excellent writer has observed, “there will be inaccuracies in theology while men preach, and errors in governments while men rule.” This, however,



should make us set the higher value upon the pure word of God: I, therefore, freely acknowledge how much I need the forbearance of my heavenly Father, and the candour of my readers in this publication. Still it is a duty which I owe to the same Almighty Being and to my own conscience, in this prefatory Address, to declare, I am now passing the meridian of life, and by numberless incitements, am called to anticipate death and eternity. Time is short, truth is divine and inestimably precious. Under these impressions, the following Lectures were composed, and are now made public. And in the construction of them I solemnly declare I have not introduced a single sentence but what, from deliberate thought, I firmly hope bears the impress of the Gospel, and is calculated to destroy vice, promote the purest virtue, and aid the real Christian in his *life and walk of faith*.

In humility I copy the example of St. Peter, who wrote his Epistles with the view that his sentiments might be kept in veneration after his death; and would hope that some of my dearest connections, both in America and in Europe, by these Lectures,

*after my decease, may be able to have those things in remembrance, which they have for so many years, and, I trust, not altogether in vain, heard from my lips. As the success of every truth we preach, and every truth we write, wholly depends upon the influence of the ETERNAL SPIRIT, I close this Address, sincerely praying the MOST HIGH GOD will vouchsafe to bless what shall be found in this volume calculated for the conversion of sinners, the instruction of Christians, and the glory of his own adored name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*New-York, August 18, 1806.*



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# LECTURE I.

---

## DOMESTIC FELICITY.

---

LUKE X. 5.

*Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be unto  
this house.*

*Peace be to this habitation,  
Peace to every soul therein;  
Peace, the foretaste of salvation,  
Peace, the fruit of cancel'd sin!  
Peace, that speaks its heav'nly Giver,  
Peace to sensual minds unknown;  
Peace divine, that lasts for ever,  
Here erect its glorious throne.*

A. M. T.

THIS direction admirably accords with the character of Christ as PRINCE of PEACE, who by the blood of his cross has made peace between provoked justice and rebellious man; and therefore commissioned his disciples to publish that peace into whatsoever house they should enter. If we receive the text in the form of a *prayer*, it imports the dependence of the disciples upon their Lord, to confer the blessing. If to be used as a Gospel *salutation*, it expresses their generous disposition, that, let the family among whom they should enter be either religious or vain, they wished that they might enjoy the celestial blessing of peace, and be crowned with prosperity.

With such sentiments we commence the pleasing duty of DOMESTIC INSTRUCTION, by a series of discourses, sentimental and practical, constituting a BODY OF DIVINITY in miniature, which, we hope, under the benediction of the Almighty, may contribute to your personal and social felicity. With such cheering expectation, I pur-

pose, in this introductory Lecture, to explain to you what I presume to be essential to constitute domestic happiness.

A family is a little society usually consisting of parents, children, and servants; but in this term we comprehend all who inhabit the same dwelling and compose the same household, be they more or less numerous. Domestic felicity is one of the most essential blessings of human life, and has a very material influence upon the more ample circles of society. If we are deficient in this, it imbitters almost every enjoyment of life. It is acknowledged that the habits of education and rank may sometimes curb the passions, and produce a degree of order and amiableness. Real felicity, however, cannot dwell in that heart, nor under the same roof, where practical vice is cultivated in any form; and, it is equally true, that one vicious person in a family may become the baneful source of disquietude to the whole. It is the **GOSPEL OF CHRIST** which opens those sources that are adequate to create substantial blessedness in a family. What some of these are, I shall now briefly explain, sincerely wishing you may know their charming imports by happy possession!

1. The first I shall name is the personal experience of that *peace* which the Saviour commanded his disciples to proclaim; for, as the heart of individuals, so generally is the happiness of the domestic circle. It is a fact as humiliating as it is true, that we have sinned against the being, the perfections, and the law of our Maker; and that thereby our souls are extremely depraved, and are exposed to numerous evils, and eventually to condign punishment. No man, therefore, can be deemed happy while his crimes are unpardoned, and his heart unre-

newed. A sensibility of this fallen, wretched, condemned state is essential to the reception of Gospel peace. When this conviction is properly received, nothing will satisfy the mind and ease the pangs of the heart till reconciliation with God be enjoyed. *The spirit of a man may sustain his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear?* Present obedience is not admissible by the laws of God or man, as an atonement for past transgressions. Punishment, or complete satisfaction, by a substitute, must determine the all-important case between the sinner and his Judge! Not a line in the volume of nature will tell him how God can be a just God, and yet a Saviour! To a person of this sensibility how beautiful are the feet of them that publish peace, that bring good tidings of salvation by the Son of God? who became the sinner's friend, obeyed the injured law, atoned for crimes of deepest dye in his own blood, and is now exalted at his Father's right hand, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sin. The enjoyment of this blessedness is from the influencing power of the Spirit of God, by creating faith in the heart to receive the inviting word of Christ, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

How truly great the felicity such peace conveys! sins pardoned; the person accepted; communion with God enjoyed; the blessings of grace secured; the privileges of Zion unfolded; death disarmed; eternity, with all its glory, promised by a faithful God! What great things are here? Thus we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and we rejoice in hope of the glory that is to come. This peace rules in the heart, sanctifies the passions, influences the whole conduct, while the lips incessantly praise the Lord for that peace which passeth



all understanding. This is a short description of the religion of that heart which is born again of God. It is the broad basis of grace, on which the superstructure of personal as well as social virtue and happiness must be raised. It forms the leading features of a child of God, let his external profession or denomination be what it may, never failing to issue in the praise of free, distinguishing, persevering grace. Happy are you who possess it! A family composed of such children of peace, must certainly be like an heaven upon earth! and, even an individual of that description to be found among an household, by his temper and example, will prove an ornament and a blessing. Thus Laban said unto Jacob, "*I have learned by experience, that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.*" This felicity is still heightened, when the master of a family is endowed with the possession of sacred peace, and, like venerable Joshua, the servant of the Lord, who, in the face of multitudes, at the head of a numerous household, publicly announced his religion, he may say, "*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*"

2. A disposition to fill every respective **RELATION** and **STATION** in which God hath placed you, is an important mean to promote domestic felicity. That there is an equality in the worth of our souls, in our interest in Christ, the privileges of grace, and a title to glory, together with the rights of civil freedom, none but those who are lost to the dictates of reason and Revelation will attempt to deny. But sacred and inviolable as those equal rights may be held, their misapplication, when suffered to counteract the relation of parents and children, of masters and servants, becomes subversive of all social happiness, and the baneful source of discord and irregu-

happiness. There are, alas! but too many striking instances exhibited in the world to eradicate every doubt as to the justness of this remark. And while we deplore the unhappiness of families, where, for the want of religion, irregularity prevails, we cannot but devoutly wish that those who profess to be the sons of Gospel peace would study the relations they bear to each other, render just subordination, and, mutually determining to pursue the things which make for peace, set a brilliant example to others. We dare not say that nature is quite lost to her respective relations; but we affirm, that the Bible is the most valuable book of ethics, having placed every relation of society, whether domestic, national, or ecclesiastical, in the most admirable and beneficial point of view, sanctioned by the authority of the God of peace. Permit me to select some instances appropriate to these relations of domestic life. “*Let every one of you in particular, so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*” “*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*” “*Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*” “*Servants be obedient to them that are your masters; and ye masters, do the same things unto them.*” “*He that hath friends should show himself friendly.*” “*Use hospitality one towards another.*” These are precepts as plain as they are necessary; they need no comment; an observance of them cannot fail to produce the most agreeable sensations, and happily secure both the interest and the pleasure of the family. May you, like David, *walk within your house with a perfect heart.*

3. FAMILY WORSHIP. If to worship God be the duty and felicity of an individual, it must be equally so to an

household. By family worship is intended an observance of stated daily periods for approaching God by prayer and praise, accompanied with reading the Scriptures, or such other volumes as may tend to the edification of the family. Who shall perform this service? the times when? and in what manner? As there are no positive rules in the Scriptures, perhaps it had better be left to the discretion of those who are immediately concerned, and who will adjust them as best comports with the circumstances of the family. It has been said, and I think with much propriety, that "every master of a family should be a prophet to teach, a priest to pray for, and a king to rule over his household." That family worship is agreeable to the dictate of nature, is not only evident from the idea of our perpetual dependence upon a SUPREME BEING, but from the acts of worship paid by heathens to their household deities. Revelation informs us that *Abraham, Job, Joshua, David*, and other ancient worthies, were zealous in promoting family worship. In the New Testament we read of the practice of devotion in the house of *Priscilla and Aquila*; also in the habitation of *Mary the mother of John*; and in the family of *Nymphas*; particularly in the instance of *Cornelius*, who *feared God with all his house, and prayed to God alway*. The advantages to be derived from domestic worship are extremely great. While the hearts of the pious, in the discharge of their duty, feel the most happy emotions, their devotion to the God of their mercy sets a valuable example to children and to servants.

Amongst the most regular families it is too often found that through diversity of tempers, temptations, and misunderstandings, mistakes unavoidably occur, and create general disquietude: But called to family worship, bow-



ing before the most high God, is the most likely way to bury every animosity, and the gloom of disquietude is exchanged for affability and pleasure. Such are some of the benefits of family devotion; and such an house, like the family of Obbedom, shall *be blessed for the Ark sake*.

4. A conscientious observance of the LORD'S DAY is certainly a mean of promoting the moral felicity of a family. Private and public worship are inseparably connected. It is to be lamented that a neglect of the Lord's day is one of the growing evils of the age. It certainly has the most fatal tendency to vitiate the morals of youth, and frequently proves the first step to infamy and ruin. In proportion to the piety of parents and of masters, will be the government of their children and servants in regard to observing the private and public duties of the Lord's day. Recreation is unquestionably necessary to preserve the health and vivacity of youth, and with it they should be indulged; but since the use of the Lord's day for that purpose has proved so fatal to the morals of young persons, and has been attended with so many evident marks of the Divine displeasure, it is earnestly to be wished that a portion of time in the week should be allotted them for recreation, and that every incitement should be given them *to keep holy the Sabbath day*. Can a pious parent or master enjoy the sweets of devotion while his children or his servants are willingly permitted to turn their back upon the worship of Jehovah, probably, either on land or water, united with companions who encourage them in the rounds of dissipation and sensuality? Impossible! For the sake, therefore, of the moral interest of those committed to your care—for the happiness of domestic life—and for the public wel-

fare, govern your families in the fear of your God, that his blessings may abide upon you.

You cannot expect that, in this single discourse, I should give general directions for meditation, reading, examination, prayer, praise, and cheerful conversation; all I shall at present say is, may you, with the beloved John, be *in the Spirit on the Lord's day*; and the *Lord of the day* grant you his benediction.

5. The last thing I shall name as contributing to the pleasures of domestic life, is the frequent contemplation of the felicity of the FAMILY IN HEAVEN. Unconscious of to-morrow, we live upon the bounty of an hour. The place that now knoweth us in our families will soon know us no more. Parents and children, masters, servants, and friends, the most tender and endearing ties must submit to the stroke of death! This solemn reflection may cast a damp upon the joys of those whose breasts are strangers to the peace of God; but it will never fail to operate in a very different manner upon that family whom the Lord shall bless. Being joint-heirs with Christ, they will welcome death as a friendly messenger to usher them into the family in heaven. An innumerable company, related to one EVERLASTING FATHER, interested in the same inestimably precious LOVE, redeemed by the same CHRIST, called by the same spirit, enriched by the same grace, and preserved by the same power; after having suffered and wept here below, by death, they dropped their cumbrous clay: free from sin, and free from pain, they now reside in one sacred *house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*. There the FATHER spreads his glories all around! There JESUS, our heavenly *Joseph*, fully makes himself known to his brethren in all the charms of love! No need of the *sun*, nor of

the moon, nor of the light of the candle; natural nor artificial light are necessary in that celestial mansion, for *God and the Lamb are the light of it*: no discordant notes are heard; prejudice and party names, which kept them at “jarring odds” below, are vanished away, and pure love and joy flow from soul to soul. Bear with me while I suggest the thought, though at the expense of a silent tear—in that blessed family above reside some of your dearest, pious relatives, whom death has taken from your arms! They are not lost; they are not lodged in the dark regions of despair; they are with the Lord, who bought them with his blood; and they now sing his praise on harps of gold! Let the Saviour’s peace dwell in your heart—obey his holy will in every relation of your life—regard his holy day—let your conversation be in heaven—and soon you will be transmitted from your tabernacle of clay, to dwell for ever in the mansion of eternal bliss!

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☞ The number to the appropriate HYMNS, at the end of the volume, will be found to correspond with the number of the Lecture.

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## LECTURE II.

---

### CHRIST THE ALPHA AND OMEGA.

---

REV. i. 8.

*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending,  
saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which  
is to come, the Almighty.*

Come, thou dear, all-lovely Jesus,  
Help us, Lord, to live to thee;  
From the power of sin release us,  
Alpha and Omega be;  
Come thou lovely \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief among ten thousand be.

THE Revelations of this book were made by Jesus Christ to his servant John, concerning the future events which should take place in the world, and in the church, through successive ages, until the consummation of all things: of course it was highly necessary that Christ should assert his own character, for by him such events were to be produced. What epithets could more charmingly convey to St. John, or to us, the knowledge of Christ, as the author and finisher of these great things, than the words of our text? Who could control nations, demolish kingdoms, subdue satan, raise the dead, and produce a new state of things in the moral world, but he who is the Almighty God? Such things have been in operation for many ages, and they shall be completed by that Jesus who is *God over all blessed for evermore!*

It is worthy of note, that as the style of the book of *Revelations* is symbolical, so the figurative expressions in the text are perfectly consonant. By this passage you

may learn what Christ is in himself, and what he is to his people.

*Alpha* and *Omega* are the first and the last letters in the Greek alphabet; the nature of which is explained in the next clause. The same is mentioned in the 11th and 17th verses, as the *first* and the *last*. They are also pertinently introduced in the last chapter and 13th verse of this book, which exhibits the time when all the promises and the prophecies relating to the kingdom of Christ will be finished, and God himself be all in all.

1. By the aid of our text let us attempt to learn what CHRIST IS IN HIMSELF.

By *Alpha* Jesus is known in his DIVINE NATURE as the first cause, the uncreated, self-existent JEHOVAH. The Supreme Being claimed this very title, in the revelation of himself to the prophet Isaiah, "*I am the Lord, the first, and with the last I am he.*" "*Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God.*" "*Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel, my called, I am he, I am the first, and I am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundations of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.*" These sublime passages, compared with our text, are sufficient to convince us of the just claim of Jesus to divinity. The Godhead of Christ is the first and the grand principle of our religion. If Jesus be not the self-existent God, the *first* and the *last*, there can be no confidence placed in his promises—no virtue in his grace—no perfection in his salvation—nor can there be any accomplishment of those purposes which are recorded in the Bible. We confess, "*Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the*



*flesh.*" Yet the fact is revealed, and this is the Saviour by whom alone sinful man can be restored to God in peace, be influenced to the practice of virtue, and rejoice in hope of the enjoyment of happiness for ever ! *Alpha*, the first letter in the alphabet, must be understood before we can proceed to the next ; and without which all the rest will be of no use : equally so we must first understand Jesus as "*the true God and eternal life,*" before we can derive any special benefit from the other truths of the Gospel. Indeed, on the first letter, *alpha*, all the rest depend, and, if that be omitted, the alphabet is incomplete ; so, in the Gospel, without the belief of Christ in his self-existent, underived Godhead, all the doctrines, promises, institutions, and hopes which are revealed, vanish as an empty dream, and leave us in our sins. *Alpha*, the first letter, is a necessary introduction to the rest ; and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, as the ever blessed God, leads to an easy acquaintance with every other revealed truth. Necessity obliges me to say, there are many who profess Christianity, and yet deny Jesus in his essential underived Godhead. Erring in this first and most important point, their other sentiments are evidently wrong ; their system is obscure and perplexing, as would be an alphabet without its first and primary letter. Let us then be thankful, if we have been taught the divinity of Jesus—may its influence be ever operative on our hearts and lives.

By this first letter, *alpha*, we may also learn the **MEDITATORIAL CHARACTER OF JESUS**. He is the *first* and the *head* of all the family of grace. He is declared to be "*the first-born of every creature ;*" as Jesus, God with us, he is the author of all angelic and human existence ; he is particularly so as the author of the *new cre-*

ation; for, if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature. And for the same reason Christ is called the beginning of the creation of God; the first born among many brethren; and to his image all, eventually, shall be conformed. After the conquest of Jesus upon the cross, he arose from the dead, and became the first fruit of them that slept; or, as it is more strongly expressed in Col. i. 18, *He is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.* Thus we learn the completeness and the glory of Jesus as Mediator; the Alpha, the head, the fountain, the forerunner, the first fruit, able and mighty to redeem; the first in love, the first in power, the first in grace, and the first in glory!

Our text informs us Jesus is not only Alpha but Omega, the last as well as the first—the end as well as the beginning. This instructs us that Jesus, as MEDIATOR, is the end, the completer of all the purposes, counsels, and promises of grace; that as Jesus began them, and is carrying them on, so he will assuredly bring them to a glorious issue; not one thing shall fail of which the Lord our God hath spoken. In no instance does Jesus, our Mediator, appear in the character of Omega, as in our law fulfiller. *He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* He was made under the law; he came to fulfil the law, that neither jot nor tittle should fail; the law was in his heart, and honoured in his most holy life; he sustained its awful penalties for his people, redeeming them from the curse of the law; he being made a curse for them. May I not repeat that Jesus, our Mediator and Law-fulfiller, having honoured the precepts we have violated, and borne the curse we

had merited, appears to us in the most interesting and important character. Here is complete redemption, an all-sufficient justification, the highest display of divine attributes in the salvation of men, and the crown of glory produced for ever to shine upon the head of Immanuel!

By this last letter in the Greek alphabet, *Omega*, we likewise learn the HUMILIATION OF JESUS. As *Alpha*, he was the first, the highest, and the most glorious; yet, to obtain eternal redemption for us, he became the lowest and most abased upon earth. He was made lower than the Angels; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs; a worm, and no man. This subject ought sensibly to affect us. Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich. Though he was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. O for an heart to adore the Saviour in whom such extremes of light and darkness, riches and poverty, honour and debasement, have been experienced! The *Alpha*, the highest in glory; the *Omega*, the lowest in sorrow; both absolutely necessary to constitute Jesus a complete Saviour for sinners.

May I not add, that Jesus, *Omega*, reminds us of the last scene of human things, and himself as JUDGE of all mankind. The solemn scene of retribution makes a very material part of the Holy Bible. As *Alpha*, the first, the beginning, the Almighty, manifest in our nature, Jesus bears the most august character, as that supreme Judge,



who, in truth, wisdom, and righteousness, shall fix the final state of man.

The first and the last letters of an alphabet necessarily include all the rest, and the *Alpha* and the *Omega* denote the perfection of the whole. This idea leads us to contemplate Jesus, in whom all possible perfection dwells; or, as Paul expresseth it, *in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. And as he is the Mediator, in whom all perfection of wisdom, power, truth, grace, righteousness, and eternal love dwell, we adore him as the perfection of beauty, the fountain of blessedness, and the brightness of glory!

From the alphabet we take letters, make words, form sentences, chapters, and volumes, for the preservation of our ideas, and the communication of them for the interesting purpose of diffusing knowledge to mankind. As Jesus, who is *Alpha* and *Omega*, is the image of the invisible God, it is from him alone we can, as fallen beings, collect ideas of JEHOVAH as gracious and merciful to us. A God in Christ is the current theme of the Scriptures. This Jesus is the fountain of wisdom. We could as easily compose a volume without an alphabet, as obtain spiritual knowledge without Jesus. It is from hence God fulfils his gracious promise, and *turns to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent*.

Thus let us read our text with advantage; learn Jesus *Alpha*, in his divinity, as the ALMIGHTY, and in his official character as the great MEDIATOR. Let us often reflect on the depth of his humiliation as our *Omega*, with the perfection of his truth and his grace, and adore him for what he is in HIMSELF.

2. According to promise, we shall spend a few minutes

more to learn what this text will teach us of the relation Jesus bears to us. This is an interesting part of the subject; for a Christ, however glorious in himself, unless enjoyed, can afford no satisfaction to a sinner's heart. Jesus is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end of your salvation, the spiritual life of your souls, the author of your conversion, sanctification, establishment, perseverance; all comes from Jesus. He is, therefore, styled *the author and the finisher of our faith*. The redemption of Christ was necessary to save you from hell; and salvation, by the Spirit of Christ, is equally necessary to qualify you for heaven; for, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, let his pretensions be what they may. Contemplate Jesus as your *Alpha* and *Omega*. Your first spiritual motion of soul, the first dawn of heavenly light, and your first taste of sacred love, all equally proceed from him. As the *Omega*, the end, the finisher, he knows how to ripen your soul for glory, how to put the last finishing stroke to your faith, your sufferings, and your experience.

Jesus is *Alpha*, the first, the beginning, the foundation-stone of strength to his visible Church; and he shall be found the *Omega*, the corner-stone, and the top-stone of beauty and perfection to the whole. Churches and Ministers should thus honour Jesus as their *Alpha* and *Omega*. All institutions, privileges, gifts, laws, grace, prosperity to individuals and to the Church collectively, which are ennobling to the soul, and worthy of God, proceed from him. And equally happy is that FAMILY whose end and aim, duties and mercies, are enjoyed from the same celestial source! To make Jesus the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end of all domestic engagements; to consider him, from first to last, in all dis-

appointments and sufferings, will never fail to yield a thousand sacred sweets. *Christ is all, and in all.* Bless him all ye people, and magnify him all ye who are on your way to glory. Trust him all ye who are the children of sorrow; he will not forsake the work of his hand. Praise him all ye Ministers of his that publish salvation in his name. As from Jesus, your *Alpha* and *Omega*, you learn the language of grace in this valley of tears, soon shall you be transmitted to the mansions above, where, in the highest perfection, you shall praise him as the first and the last, as God over all blessed for ever more.

—————Thou, my all!

My theme, my inspiration, and my crown!

My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth! my world!

My boast thro' time, my bliss thro' eternity.

Eternity, too short to speak thy praise,

Or fathom thy profound of love to man!

Praise! flow for ever (if astonishment

Will give thee leave), my praise for ever flow;

Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high heav'n

More fragrant than Arabia sacrific'd,

And all her spicy mountains in a flame.

YOUNG.

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## LECTURE III.

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### PERSONAL RELIGION.

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#### 1 PETER iii. 4.

#### *The hidden man of the heart.*

Lord, while thy glorious works I view,  
Form thou my heart and soul anew;  
Here bid thy purest light to shine,  
And beauty glow with charms divine.

N.

FROM the contents of this chapter we find Peter was under a necessity to dissuade some female professors of religion from extravagance in dress; but, at the same time, descends from the decorations of the body to the more important concerns of the soul. Perhaps all that may be denominated "PERSONAL RELIGION" will be found comprised in this remarkable sentence, *the hidden man of the heart*. As our meditations upon it may instruct our minds in the true religion of the heart, let us inquire, Why this bears the appellation of *man*? Why it is called *the man of the heart*? and how far this is said to be concealed, or *the hidden man of the heart*? In the conclusion of this discourse may we each be found in possession of this true religion of the soul, and be influenced to live to the honour of our God.

1. Why personal religion bears the appellation of *man*. Others, perhaps, in discussing this subject, would rather have introduced the term *grace*, in preference to "personal religion." Be it so, provided we can understand the subject, and find ourselves in possession of the *thing*. This is not the only text where religion in the

soul is called man. Paul calls it, *the inner man—the new man*, in contradistinction to *the old man, which is corrupt*. In order to render this subject as clear as possible, I shall claim your attention to a few select observations.

Man is confessedly the creature of God. The new and hidden man of the heart is not so much the new creation of God, as he is the LORD CREATOR, as he is the LORD REDEEMER, and *the God of all grace*. To each divine person in the unity of the Godhead this new creation is attributed. *The Father hath begotten us again—created in Christ Jesus—born again of the Spirit*. As it is with the production of man as a creature, so it is with the hidden man of the heart. A NATURE is communicated in regeneration, which is an instantaneous operation of God, and then that new man in embryo is delivered into visible, active life, by being *born of the Spirit*. If you ask me, What is that *nature* which is communicated, and which produces this new creature? I reply, It is the *nature* of Jesus Christ. Paul teaches us this truth, *He revealed his Son in me. Christ in you, the hope of glory*. And I am disposed further to say, as the Holy Spirit formed the nature of Jesus in the Virgin Mary, that he might be the Head and the Father of the family of grace; so, the same Spirit conveys the nature of Jesus to sinners, to form them new creatures, and make them spiritual members of his body. To add no more, it is, I presume, for this very reason the promise was made for Messiah, saying, *He shall see his seed*. We therefore believe that this is the origin of the new man, the hidden man of the heart, created in righteousness and true holiness, after the image of the Lord. This it is that makes the true Christian; *for, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*.



The subject of natural birth, though an infant of days, and little more than a span long, is acknowledged perfect in its parts, although by maturity of age it passes from infancy to youth, to manhood, and to old age. It is equally so with the hidden man of the heart. The youngest Christian, made so by regeneration of the Spirit, is as really a child of God, in the possession of grace, and in union with Christ, as the most aged father in Christ. And as it is with humanity, so it is with the Christian; he hath his stages of spiritual growth; and therefore we read of *new-born babes desiring the sincere milk of the word*; *young men strong in the Lord*; and *fathers* who have had the longest experience of grace: and although God sometimes cuts off the young Christian in his bloom, all who are in possession of the hidden man of the heart, pass their various stages with the duties and labours incidental to each, and all shall arrive *to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*.

Human nature is sustained by alimentary food, granted by the God of nature, and with which the appetites of hunger and thirst are satiated, answering for the purposes of nourishment, strength, comfort, and growth. The new man, who is equally formed by grace, not only requires a mean of sustenance, but the God of all grace has appointed spiritual food agreeable to its own nature. In this we are not left to our choice, as in the infinite variety of the bounties of Providence; our spiritual meat and drink are determined. As when Moses pointed the Israelites to the manna, saying, *This is the food which the Lord hath commanded you to eat*, so Jesus saith unto all his disciples, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: for*

*my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* On this, and only on this celestial food the hidden man of the heart can live, enjoy spiritual health, and abound in the fruits of righteousness, to the praise of God our Father.

The last observation made, leads us to ask, For what end was this hidden man of the heart created? God himself makes the reply—*This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise.* The first creation of man displayed the wisdom and power of Jehovah; but the creation of the new man in Christ displays the harmony and glory of his wisdom, power, justice, mercy, grace, love, every attribute that can be conceived by mortals, laying a foundation for gratitude, adoration, and praise. Although this end of the new creation is obvious, we are further instructed, that it is *a child of God, an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ*; so that we may safely conclude, all that can constitute the perfection and blessedness of the new man in this or the future life, shall be enjoyed in the highest degree possible. One other end in this new creation I must name, is in relation to society. The hidden man of the heart finds its own likeness, and forms a sacred union. Of such characters the CHURCH OF GOD are formed, and mutually promote the interest and happiness of each other. And next to this, how happy must that FAMILY be, whose members are materially formed of such valuable persons! David called them, *the excellent of the earth, in whom his soul delighted.*

The last observation designed for your attention on this new man of the heart, is its *incorruptibility*. This is not only asserted by Peter, in the verse of our text, but, in other passages it is said, *Though our outward man*



*perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. This new man is born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* Besides, as this new man of the heart is not only created by, but IN Christ, and Christ himself being set down at the Father's right hand in glory, as the head and representative of his new-born family; each individual of course must be immortal like their Saviour, who is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever; and shall possess an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away,

From these observations on the hidden man of the heart, as the creation of the God of grace; its nature, growth, and sustenance; the design of its creation to God and society; and likewise its incorruptibility; I must now, according to promise,

2. Inquire why this is so emphatically styled the man of the *heart*? To this we have briefly to reply; it is to denote its reality, that as the heart is the seat of life, and the spring of all actions to the members of the body, so this new man of the heart dictates and produces all those moral and spiritual actions which are enjoined on the Christian in the Gospel, the performance of which are worthy of his God. It is also not without meaning, to show the difference between the professed and the real Christian: the former may have the *appearance* of the new man; the latter *actually possess it* in his very heart: especially, it is to teach us the knowledge which God hath of this new creature. *Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.* He only is privy to the reality of grace in the soul: we may exercise a charitable opinion, but it is God alone who can positively determine the real state of any man.

Paul, therefore, was happy in saying, *He that judgeth me is the Lord*. From these few remarks, you may easily perceive that religion is a reality, that it is seated in the soul, and from thence becomes the governing principle of the life, and brings a thousand sacred sweets as its own reward. Happy are the people that are in such a case, yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord!

3. Why this is called the *hidden* man of the heart, is our last inquiry. This by no means implies that it is hidden from God, for the latter part of the verse of our text assures us *it is in the sight of God of great price*; nor that it is hidden from holy Angels, who not only rejoice in the conversion of a sinner, but encamp around those who fear the Lord. And as for fallen Angels, be assured that satan knew both Job and Peter, and asked leave to assault them with temptations. Much less do we believe that this is hidden from the subject who possesses it, for that would imply, religion is founded in ignorance, and would be contrary to the testimony of every new man of the heart, which is, *by the grace of God, I am what I am*. But the meaning and nature of their being hid, is to denote their interest, security, and happiness in God. *Your life is hid with Christ in God*. As likewise, to express the secret and sensible communion which the Christian enjoys with God in times of calamity, and, as such, the Scripture appellation of the righteous is, *God's hidden ones*. To which we may add, that the new man of the heart is unintelligible by the world, who, generally, either with *Nicodemus*, express their ignorance of the Christian character, or, with *Nero*, attempt to destroy it. Upon the whole, we may venture to affirm, that the hidden man of the heart lies in the bosom and the council of God; however secluded he may be in his present state, his real

character shall appear in that day, when the body shall be raised from the grave, and the soul in union be received to everlasting life.

From the whole of these observations on the hidden man of the heart, how necessary and important is it for you to retire within the chamber of your breasts, and examine if the features of this new man are found with you? Distressing and dangerous in extreme must it be to live under the power of the *old corrupt man, which is after the flesh*; for, if ye live after the flesh, you shall die without comfort or hope. The old man of sin can never produce holy and spiritual desires after God and Christ; that which is of the flesh, is flesh still, and will always remain so till the final judgment. While this should produce conviction in the breast of the thoughtless sinner, I think it affords a consoling argument to those who are anxious to enjoy the presence of the Lord. Indeed, it is so, for as corrupt nature never can produce spiritual desires for pardon, peace, and happiness in God, you who enjoy such longings, may take it for granted, God hath already begun to be very gracious to you. It was not always thus with you; thank the Lord for this infant state of the new man in your heart, and trust him to deliver you into the sweet and glorious liberty of the children of God.

Those of you who are already established in these things of God, know, that in your breast, as in one habitation, the old and the new man of the heart have their dwelling. On conversion, though the old man of sin in you was neither killed nor buried, yet he received his mortal wound; and, as Mr. WHITFIELD used to express it, THE OLD MAN DIES HARD. He pants and fights for breath; his groans are terrible and alarming to the pious

mind; and it must never be forgotten, that these two, the *old* and the *new man*, will lodge together in the same breast until death destroys the old, and introduces the new man to everlasting bliss! Remember that it is the constant opposition between these two natures which makes the Christian warfare, and produces real experience. In proportion to the strength, health, and victory of the hidden man of the heart, personal sanctification advances. In making that estimate, be careful to distinguish the fruit of the old from the virtues of the new man. Trust the Lord to complete his own work. Live daily upon Christ, the only food of the new man. Be zealous for the Lord who hath done so much for you; and, in a little while, the new man of grace shall be in the new world of glory, to praise the Lord for ever and ever!

Internal evidence assures the man  
Who feels it of the pow'r of truth divine;  
And truth divine assures the man who sees  
Its hidden beauties of a place in heav'n.  
But rich experience will produce rich fruit;  
And holy meditations in the heart,  
Nurtur'd, will into holy actions spring.  
Thoughts, words, and actions, in one golden chain  
Together link'd in harmony, and worn  
With the becoming grace, experience adds,  
Is Christian beauty, flourish where it may.

SWAIN.

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## LECTURE IV.

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### *THE HAPPY SABBATH.*

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REV. i. 10.

*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.*

In holy duties let the day  
In holy pleasures pass away ;  
How sweet a Sabbath thus to spend  
In hope of one that ne'er shall end!

*Stennett.*

THE history of God's people evinces, that the most painful events are frequently subservient to their greatest advantage ; and it is equally true, that their faith and love never appear more resplendent than in the furnace of affliction. God turned the curse of Balak against Israel into a blessing ; and equally so, when Domitian sentenced John into exile, in the Isle of Patmos, God there gave him the brightest views of the glory of Christ ; revealed to him a variety of the most important events which should take place in the world and in the Church ; and, at the same time, indulged him with the richest experience of celestial love and communion with himself. Though John was banished from the public assemblies of the Church, he was not unmindful of the Lord's day ; nor did the Lord of the day forget him. He was in the Spirit. From thence alone the pleasures of the Sabbath can arise, whether in exile, in the private chamber, or in the congregation of the Lord. It is my intention, therefore, in this discourse, to show you the influence of the Spirit of God upon the soul of man, in order to the enjoyment of an happy Sabbath ; sincerely wishing you



may personally experience what it is to be in the Spirit on the Lord's day.

1. By the Spirit of God alone a communication can be opened between a sinner and his God. *He must be born again of the Spirit*, else it is absolutely impossible the soul should move towards God in prayer and praise, which are the two principal parts of worship. *God is a Spirit; and they who worship him, must worship in spirit and in truth.* Just views of God, who is the object of worship, a consciousness of our sinfulness, and an hope of acceptance in the person, righteousness, and intercession of the Lord Christ, are derived immediately by the soul of man from the Spirit of God. *Through Christ we have access, by one Spirit, unto the Father.* And it is well known, after this intercourse is opened by the Spirit of God, that the worshipper meets with numberless temptations and evils to interrupt his mind in maintaining the comfort of communion with his God, in his closet, and in the Church, on the Lord's day. We are, therefore, directed to the Spirit, who *helpeth our infirmities*; and by whose agency the mind is illuminated, faith is called into exercise, and the power of prayer raised in the heart, so that the pleasures of fellowship with God flow abundantly into the soul. This is that *communion of the Holy Ghost* which Paul so ardently wished the Corinthian Church. This gives wings to prayer; for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. This it is that constitutes the true circumcision; and those who possess it worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

You now clearly see, that to be in the Spirit on the Lord's day, is not only for the Spirit of the Lord to be in you, but that it is his holy influence which must enliven,

warm, and actuate your souls, in order to enjoy the sacred sweets of devotion on the Lord's day. May the unction of this blessed Spirit be more abundantly poured out upon you, that, whether in private or public, your Sabbaths on earth may be spent in the most sensible communion with God.

2. It is with peculiar pleasure I assert that to be in the Spirit on the Lord's day, is to have a sight of the glories, and a taste of the love of the LORD OF THE DAY. On reading the book of Revelations, who but must stand in profound admiration at the grand and infinite excellence of the appearance of Jesus Christ to St. John! What is the Sabbath day to a true Christian if he hath no sight of Christ the beloved of his soul, and the fountain from whence all his hopes and comforts flow? Jesus assured his disciples that the Spirit of truth should come; he should guide them into all truth, bring all things to their remembrance; and that he should glorify Christ, by taking of his excellencies, and reveal them to their understandings, so as to afford them the most sublime joy of heart. From this source also, we must receive all our views of Jesus, and derive our hope in him; for *no man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*. We may here easily discover the cause why we are so little acquainted with Christ, and so seldom, with David, *see his glory in the sanctuary*. Ah! how often do we grieve the Spirit of Jesus in this branch of his holy work, and rob ourselves of the true pleasures of the Lord's day! Were we more habitually under the influence of this GLORIFIER OF JESUS, what frequent and transcendant views should we enjoy of the grandeur of Immanuel's nature! We should behold the variety and virtue of his offices, the endearing relations he bears to his people, the complete-



ness of his redemption, the unsearchable riches of his grace, and the promise of his coming in the brightness of his glory, to receive us to himself! Let us then remember, as God hath promised *his Spirit to them that ask him*, that our duty, interest, joy, and happiness, call upon us to plead for the soul-animating influence of that Spirit. In proportion to our views of Christ, and our experience of his grace, will be the true pleasures of the Sabbath. That must be a gloomy Sabbath, in which the Sun of Righteousness does not arise and shine upon you. In our future days, may each, with rapture, be able to declare, *I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste!*

3. Another invaluable privilege of possessing the Spirit on the Lord's day, is an evidence of ADOPTION. To worship God is certainly the duty of rational beings; but the case with man, by sin, is such, that he has lost his moral power and inclination to this duty. If any, therefore, are found to worship God, it must be upon a principle which nature can neither bestow nor devise. God, as the God of grace, hath adopted his children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. The knowledge and experience of our personal interest in this adopting grace, is by the teaching of the Spirit. *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* Possessed of this Spirit, you are enabled to worship God in private or in public, not as *slaves* or as *foreigners*, but as *children* begotten again of the Lord, made nigh by the cross of Jesus, and heirs of God through Christ. The love of your everlasting Father, you will enjoy as shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost given unto you, and enable you to delight in God; pray in sweetest

confidence of his regard; feel an hatred to the very appearances of evil; and ardently desire to obey every precept which is revealed in the Gospel for the government of your heart, the regulation of your life, under every character you sustain, and in every department allotted you in the world. Actuated by this blessed Spirit, you not only abound in hope, and have joy and peace in believing, but your duties and privileges, as the sons of God, will afford you a thousand sacred sweets. The word of God, whether preached or read, you will receive with attention, humility, and joy. Let your path in life be afflictive or prosperous, you can, on the Lord's day, praise your God; and, if I may so say, sing your very cares away! So far from indulging an improper temper to any followers of the Lord, or members in your community, you are taught, as the children of God, to put on bowels of tenderness, compassion, and good will to all. The prosperity of Zion will lay near your heart. Your cup will sometimes overflow with compassion for sinners, and earnestly pray for an harvest of souls. Its influence will aid you materially to walk within your house with a perfect heart, desiring that those sweet pleasures of the Sabbath may be enjoyed by all who surround you. Thus God accomplishes that charming promise in Ezekiel xxxiv. 26, *I will make them, and the places about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be showers of blessings.* May the Lord do so to us, and more also!

4. It remains only that I instruct you, that those who are in the Spirit on the Lord's day, are assisted with inconcievable pleasure to anticipate the ETERNAL SABBATH—the rest which remaineth in heaven for the people of God. True, the natural eye hath not seen, nor the

ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to concieve what things the Lord hath prepared for them that love him ; but *God hath revealed them unto us by the Spirit*, who has not only described those great and eternal realities in the Gospel, but makes them known, and realizes them to the heart. Thus, the true worshipper on earth hath *his conversation in heaven*. This is equally true, whether we name the great *Jubilee Sabbath*, which is the *Millennium*, the thousand years personal reign of Christ on the new earth, or the ultimate state of felicity and glory. Through the aid of the Spirit, by the medium of the word, you may contemplate the state, the place, the numberless throng, their employ, purity, felicity and glory ! You may also hold converse with Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, now at the Father's right hand, as your Redeemer, Intercessor, and Friend ; who creates the bliss of heaven with his smiles, and who will shortly recieve you to himself, to be for ever blessed. Thus the Lord promised, *Thine eyes shall behold the King in his beauty ; thou shalt behold the land that is very far off*. What a vast addition does the contemplation of futurity make to the enjoyment of the present Sabbath ? *We now see through a glass darkly ;—there, face to face !* Now we are surrounded with a multitude of evils ;—there, freed from all, beneath the smiles of God, we shall for ever sing the praises of redeeming love ! Let this, then, be our fervent desire,—

Thy Spirit, O my Father give,  
 To be my guide and friend,  
 To light my way to ceaseless joys,  
 To Sabbaths without end.

The only reflection we shall make is, how distinguishingly happy are those who are in the Spirit of the Lord on the Lord's day, enjoying the sweets of communion with God, a transforming view of the Lord of the day; experiencing the satisfaction of an adoption into the family of God, and rejoicing in hope of spending a Sabbath in the realms of eternal bliss! especially, if we make the contrast between them and those truly unhappy persons who, notwithstanding their professed belief of the Lord's day, are found in the spirit of the world, the spirit of pride, the spirit of envy, or the spirit of satan. That multitudes are influenced by such spirits, will not admit of controversy. Let us, therefore, examine ourselves. *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.* This is the testimony of the primitive disciples, and the source from whence they enjoyed the pleasures of devotion. Making good our claim to this blessed Spirit, let us remember to plead his influences on the dawn of every Sabbath, and we shall assuredly find the possession of those joys which can alone be exceeded, by the pleasures which are at God's right hand for ever more.

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## LECTURE V.

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### ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN.

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PSALM CXIX. 9.

*Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.*

Great God, instruct this youthful breast,  
Prepare it to enjoy thy rest;  
To hoary hours my life prolong,  
And let thy mercies be my song.

OUR expectations being so much alive for the virtue of the rising generation, we cannot exert ourselves too much in affording them instruction. Nor ought we to be discouraged by that thoughtless disposition which is too much attendant upon early life. If our endeavours are successful but to a few, it will not only afford us an ample compensation, but that few, by their advice and example, may prove of the utmost benefit to others, when our heads recline upon the lap of earth.

It is to you, therefore, the young men of this family, I would now address myself, presuming you will honour me with your attention. My text are the words of David, who, when a youth, was distinguished by the Almighty in the family of *Jesse* to bear the sceptre of Israel. Nor was he unmindful of the favour of his God in the decline of his years. *O God, said he, thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wonderful works; now also, when I am old and grey headed, O God, forsake me not!* Be assured the virtues of youth are a material part of the solace of old age. I stand before



you as a faithful witness for that God who hath been the guide of my youth, and who is still the staff of my life ! From the pleasures of my past experience—the importance of your early conversion, and an hope that God will bless my instruction to you, I shall direct your attention to the words of my text.

By casting your eye upon them, you will instantly perceive they contain a QUESTION, and an ANSWER ; the former addressed as a petition to God, the latter as an answer for your information. We begin with the

QUESTION. *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way ?*

It is observable, although childhood and youth are vanity, David fixes his attention in preference to *a young man*. A person, passed from infancy to youth, and from youth to maturity of age ; a period this, when the passions are more exposed to temptations, and the world exhibits its most delusive charms. Examining this question, you may learn that a young man's ways are corrupt—that it debases his nature, and exposes him to the displeasure of his Maker—that the question is proposed by one who is sensible of his state, and that he is anxious to receive instruction and relief. On each of these I shall offer some remarks.

It is hoped, few are lost to that consciousness as not to know the path of youth is accompanied with many vices. Allowance may be made for the habits of education, natural restraints, and the stations in which youth may be placed ; but the fact is as certain as its consequences are serious, that *the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, and that continually*. Though you, my young friends, should be unwilling to confess the operation of your mind, yet we who have passed our juvenile stage

know that the imaginations of the heart are so various, and at some periods so turbulent, as to cover us with guilt and shame. And if the depraved mind is itself so fruitful of evil, to what additional depravity may it arise when aided by the powers of satan, and the numberless objects of temptation? Here the heart of every youth may be allowed to know its own bitterness. From this corrupt fountain, how many young persons of both sexes have been plunged into vices which have irrecoverably blasted their reputation! Who could have thought Absalom capable of the crimes he committed? But although such offences may not be appropriate to you, and your life may have been preserved from violent eruptions of immorality, the heart is nevertheless defiled before an holy God. The *imaginations* too frequently arise against God, the authenticity of his Word, the person and the salvation of Jesus, the certainty of death and judgment, and the necessity of a moral preparation for eternity. Good advice, a sound education, and a virtuous example, may be given you; still the natural heart is *evil, only evil, and that continually*. And should any of you be disposed to controvert the point, you will remember that I have brought forward the sentence of your God, who is greater than your hearts, and knoweth all things. But this is not all which the question in our text implies.

The sins of young men, as well as others, expose them to the displeasure of God. *The wages of sin is death*, let transgressors be of whatever age or sex they may. Therefore, *rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment*. How many young men have been



cut down in their prime, as the flower of the field, and conveyed to the grave, as Job expresses it, *while their bones were full of the sins of their youth!* Solemn event! If you live in sin, you must die in sorrow. Your reason, your conscience must unite with Scripture testimony, and pronounce these sentiments just. If so, you will better realize the question in our text; for

It implies a conviction of guilt, and a desire to obtain instruction in order for relief. We know that such sensibility is extremely painful; but it is equally certain, it is absolutely necessary to seek and obtain the knowledge of that way in which you shall be cleansed. Because many young persons are destitute of a conviction of their errors, they live without prayer, and despise the only way of relief. Saul of Tarsus no sooner saw the evil of his ways, than it was said of him, *Behold he prayeth.*

By this time, my young friends, you must perceive the justness of our remarks, that a young man's ways are defiled, and expose him to the displeasure of his Maker, and that the question in the text is proposed by those only who are sensible of their state, and desirous of relief. What impressions do these things now make upon you? Have you so far tasted the bitter fruit of folly as to turn unto the Lord by prayer, and ask how your ways can be cleansed, and your future years be crowned with peace and joy? It is for your sake, especially, we shall now attend to the

ANSWER in our text. It is *by taking heed thereto, according to the word of God.* Let us see how far God's word may instruct the inquiring youth. In the first place, it gives him a just representation of the evils, the guilt, and the misery of his case as a sinner against God. There is no other book in the world that can do this.

The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Because the word of God so anatomizes the mind, conscience, and life of sinners, is the very reason why many loose and hardened persons reject it; thereby giving themselves greater latitude in transgressions. You, my young friends, I hope, will act a contrary part; take the Bible and learn the nature of your moral disease, which, I assure you, is half way to the cure.—This invaluable volume will next discover to you, that there is *a fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness*; and that this fountain is none other than the pierced heart of the Son of God, *whose blood cleanseth from all sin*. Here, young men, however polluted in your hearts and lives, behold the LAMB OF GOD! By his atoning blood, your guilt can alone be blotted out before the judgment of your God, and sacred peace flow into your tortured breasts. While I name this heavenly balm, may its virtue be applied to every heart!—Possessed of pardon in the blood of Jesus, you will soon perceive that the word of God contains the purest directions for virtue in every possible relation and connection with mankind, whether in private or in public life. And what alone forms the true dignity of man, the Bible will open to you those duties and privileges, in which you may walk humbly and happily with God. Instead of offering you a list of duties, or explaining the holy principles on which they must be performed, I shall direct your attention to the life and example of the Lord Jesus. He passed through a state of youth undefiled, that he might honour and sanctify that early stage of life. Happy shall I be if this remark falls with due sensibility

upon every young man who hears it ! It will form a noble stimulus to every holy and benevolent action, and, at the same time, guard the avenue of your hearts against every temptation to vice.—I shall only add, as God's word will be a light unto your path in the journey of life, it will cheer your hope of immortality and glory. While in youth, you will find the Gospel more precious than gold ; but should you be continued to old age, it will assure you that God will be the present portion of your soul, and create numberless delights when time, with its vanities, are fading away. So far then, we may venture to say, the virtues of youth contribute to the felicities of old age.

Having detained you so long, I know of no better way to close this discourse than by bringing the two opposite characters to view. A young man whose ways are corrupted and devoid of the fear of God, stands ready to embrace the first and the foulest temptation to vice. He sets an immoral example, injurious to all around him : himself a stranger to the pleasures of peace with God. Under the calamities of life he has no rational support ; and no wonder, if in some fatal moment he sinks beneath his burden in untimely death ! What say you, young men, shall this be your likeness ? Place it in any light you may, can it possibly engage your approbation ? Surely not. In life devoid of peace, in death abandoned to woe ! Look then at that young man who takes heed to his ways according to God's word. Religion forms a jewel in his heart, which shall never be lost. Under the accidents of life, he has God to support him. His example contributes to the good of every private and public circle of life. He shall be like the tree planted by the river of water, that bringeth forth fruit in season ; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall pros-

per. Were there no future state—were there no joys beyond the grave—the life of pious young men contrasted with the vicious, must be pronounced happy. May this likeness be drawn by grace upon each of your hearts, and be resplendent in every action of your lives.

O thou celestial born ! dear youths of grace,  
The purchase of redeeming blood, the heirs  
Of bliss immortal, look beyond the stars,  
Up to thy native home direct thine eyes ;  
While realizing faith and steadfast hope  
Give thee rich foretastes of the joys above.  
Lo ! Jesus waits to place th' immortal crown  
Upon thy temple ; Angels shall applaud  
Thy conquest o'er the pow'rs of sin and hell.  
Then all your toils shall cease, your bliss begin,  
And joy and triumph crown the happy day.  
You shall possess immensity of bliss,  
Unbounded as the wishes of the soul,  
And lasting as its own immortal state !

FAWCETT.

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## LECTURE VI.

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### *THE UNPARALLELED SUFFERINGS OF JESUS CHRIST.*

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LAM. i. 12.

*Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.*

Ye that pass by, behold the man,  
The man of grief condemn'd for you,  
The Lamb of God for sinners slain,  
Weeping to Calvary pursue.

The rocks could feel thy powerful death,  
And tremble, and asunder part;  
O rend, with thy expiring breath  
The harder marble of our hearts."

THE text I have now read to you was uttered by Jeremiah, expressing the deep sorrow of the Hebrews under those various calamities they endured for their numerous transgressions. But they are still more expressive of the language of Jesus, suffering on the cross for the sins of his people; and in this view we shall now employ them. No subject is more solemnly sublime in itself, or necessary for us to know and to feel, than the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. Sincerely do I hope our present reflections may be accompanied with a divine blessing, that our hearts may have some suitable impressions of the love and sufferings of Christ for our redemption.

Let us contemplate the sufferings of Christ on the day of his crucifixion as the day of God's fierce anger.—The invitation of Jesus to examine his sorrows—and use the



interrogation as an improvement to ourselves, *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?*

1. THE SUFFERINGS OF JESUS. By perusing the Gospel we recognize the prediction of Isaiah, that Messiah was to be *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs*. This was verified in the life of Christ, and the farther he progressed, the more accumulated were his sufferings. In the text we are invited to behold the sorrows of the Saviour on the day of his crucifixion, because all the lines of his former sufferings then met upon him, as in one point, with inconceivable force. The day of Christ's death was predetermined; nor could the rage of the Jews hasten it, though they often attempted to lay violent hands upon him; for *his hour was not yet come*. Jesus, however, knew that the solemn day of his death drew near, and with the greatest composure told his disciples *he must go up to Jerusalem, suffer many things of the chief priests and the rulers, and then be put to death*. In order to this, Jesus was betrayed by a false disciple, and taken by wicked hands to be judged at Pilate's bar. Falsely accused and condemned, Jesus was delivered to be scourged. The soldiers, with eager hands, seized the blessed Saviour, and instantly conveyed him to the common hall, stripped his body, bound his hands, and fastened him to the post, where they exercised their hellish rage by scourging him with the utmost severity. Little did they know they were thus the mean of fulfilling an important prophecy by Isaiah—*I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting*. Yes, Jesus received the scourge, that *by his stripes we might be healed*. Go, enter the doleful place, realize the sorrows of your Lord. Go, in the light of holy writ,



see, *they make long furrows upon his back* ; his wounds gape wide, and the blood flows down to the very floor ! All this for perishing sinners ; for you, for me, who justly deserved to be cast into the awful dungeon of despair, and suffer the lash of a violated law for ever.

*The day of the Lord's vengeance* arrives. From the court Jesus was led to Calvary ; and although great must have been the loss of blood by his temples crowned with thorns, and his back lashed with the scourge, he is compelled to bear his own cross. On the summit of the hill, the place of skulls, they fastened the body of the blessed Jesus upon the cross, raised it up as a spectacle to heaven and earth, producing those extreme sorrows that should soon terminate in death. To heighten the Saviour's woe, the rabble shook their heads at him, and in his teeth cast the severest invectives. Earth and hell united to enkindle and to maintain the extreme sorrows of our blessed Lord.

But the sufferings sustained in the body of Jesus were as the lighting dawn of the fleecy snow upon the cold ground, when compared to the anguish he endured in his soul. In the language of our text, *the Lord afflicted him in the day of his fierce anger*. Why was Jesus thus afflicted, when his whole life was the perfection of virtue, *holy, harmless, and undefiled* ? *He suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring them unto God*. Jesus was charged with our offences ; the Lord, the Father laid on him, as the surety of his people, the iniquity of us all. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and made his soul an offering for sin. Under the awful punishment for our crimes, Jesus exclaimed, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me* ? Sin exposed us in

body and in soul to the just vengeance of God; and now Jesus suffers for our sins both in his body and soul. Of the sufferings of Jesus in his body some small estimate may be made; but the sufferings of his soul are absolutely incomprehensible. It is worthy our remark, that although the previous sufferings of Jesus are necessarily thrown into the scale of his vicarious satisfaction, yet the day of his bloody death is that important period when the fierce vengeance of the God of justice received the ransom price of our souls in the atoning blood of our Redeemer. The work was finished when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Important, solemn day! well might the earth tremble to its centre, and all the host of heaven withhold their brightness! yet a day in which the attributes of Jehovah shine in the redemption of guilty man. O may the transactions of the day of crucifixion live in lively characters in our breasts, and teach us to adore the Lamb of God! Our present meditations on the sufferings of Jesus are not yet, however, to close. We are,

2. To observe the injunction of our Lord in the text to mark his sufferings as unparalleled. *Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.* Well might Jesus address us, requiring attention, *Behold!* for although the sufferings of Jesus be a subject in which we are so greatly interested, there is an unbelieving propensity in us to neglect it: not to behold only, but to *see*, that is, to search into, examine, contemplate, and especially to see if any sorrows are to be compared with Christ's. How far, therefore, the sufferings of our Saviour are unparalleled must be our present inquiry.

The page of history certainly informs us of some persons, and even of some of the martyrs, who suffered,

#### 44     *The unparalleled Sufferings of Jesus Christ.*

perhaps, more in their bodies, and of a longer duration, than Christ; but then those had proportionate joy of heart from God to endure; whereas Jesus suffered both in *body* and in *soul*. Mankind suffer because they are born in sin; but Jesus suffered *for* sin imputed, and not personally his own. In our sufferings in time we can be said to have little more, if indeed so much as the *sense* of sin; but Jesus experienced both the *sense* and the *punishment* of sin. Our sufferings are merely *personal*; but the sorrows of Christ arose from the imputation of the sins of all his people, whom no man can number! Besides, if the sorrows of all the people of God were collected, great as the amount might be, they would be as the small dust of the balance in comparison with Christ's; for theirs were only for a time, whereas, we believe that Jesus suffered equivalent in his blessed body and soul, what his people, for their sins, must have endured in time and in eternity. Now, when we visit Calvary by faith, and consider these important things interwoven, if I may so say, in the cross of the Lamb, may we not justly set our seal to this truth, that Jesus, by bearing our sins, and carrying our sorrows, was infinitely unparalleled in his sufferings? Not only so, but we must acknowledge that the glory of the Redeemer's person shines through his sufferings, and leads us to adore him as both LORD and CHRIST.

3. Let us, for our improvement, examine the interrogation in the text. *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?* Ah! is it possible the sufferings of Jesus, while extended on the cross, can be a subject of indifference? It is so, and to too many. This was literally true of many who visited Calvary while Jesus was extended upon the cross; *they passed by, railed on him, wagging their*

heads, and saying, *Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross.* And how many of the same temper, influenced by the spirit of infidelity, in our present day, revile the Saviour's person, and despise the merit of his cross? Are there not many of our youth fond of vanity, whose hearts are captivated by sin, when they hear of a Saviour's sufferings, pass by, utterly unconcerned? Is it nothing, indeed, vain youth, thus to despise the friend of sinners bathed in blood? Be you assured, if your youthful crimes are pardoned, it must be by that very blood which you now despise. And ye men of busy life, with you also of grey hairs, who anticipate the grave, say, are the suffering of Jesus nothing worth to you, but pass by the cross unconcerned, in pursuit of all the world calls good and great, while every step accumulates your guilt, and makes you more unfit for that world which is to come? Stop, fellow mortals, stop! Did the earth tremble beneath a suffering Christ, and shall your hearts remain unmoved as the flinty rock? Depressed on your loss by trade, you drop a tear; but ah! what tear ever fell from your eyes on apprehension of a lost soul? Go, read the justice and the mercy of God in the cross of Jesus, and may the riches of mercy be conveyed to your hearts! Some there are who profess to know the Saviour, yet, like Peter, when his Master suffered in the High Priest's hall, *denied him.* Ye backsliders, ye followers afar off, is it nothing to you that Jesus should be bathed in sweat and in blood? What! pass by that cross under which you once could rest in peace? O that with a look of compassion, Jesus may restore to you the joy of his salvation, and enable you once more to look on him whom you have so keenly



pierced! Some there are, and not a few, who stand still and embrace the cross; they contemplate the harmony of the divine attributes in the redemption of sinners; and by that accursed tree, find the life of their souls. May I not hope, that such are some of you? From the sorrows of Jesus flow the cup of your joy! Beneath this cross, contemplating the unparalleled sufferings of Christ, and feeling your hearts attracted with his dying love, let your life in all holiness, testify your gratitude to your Saviour. Make daily use of the cross of Jesus. Here you may enjoy sensible communion with God, learn reconciliation under the sorrows of your lives, and find a purifying source adequate to mortify the evil propensities of your heart. Here too you will behold those lively expressions of eternal love which will form a sufficient stimulus to every moral and evangelical duty, and, at the same time, obtain an assurance of the continuance of every future blessing. For,

To man the bleeding cross has promis'd all:  
The bleeding cross has sworn eternal grace:  
Who gave his life, what grace can he deny?

YOUNG.



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## LECTURE VII.

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### CHRIST A PROPHET.

JOHN vi. 14.

*This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.*

My *Prophet* thou, my heavenly *Guide*,  
Thy sweet instructions I will hear;  
The words that from thy lips proceed,  
O how divinely sweet they are!  
Thee my great *Prophet* I would love,  
And imitate the bless'd above.

D.

IT was the opinion of many heathen philosophers, that from the benevolence of the Deity, he would not permit mankind to remain in its present state of gross ignorance of himself and the path to obtain substantial happiness; but would send them a teacher, far more superior than ever yet appeared in the world. The Jews also, notwithstanding what they enjoyed from *Moses* and the *Prophets*, were taught to look forward for the appearance of a greater *Teacher*, who should scatter the clouds of error, and reveal those most sublime truths which are worthy of Jehovah, and necessary to the present and future felicity of men. In the PROPHETIC CHARACTER Jesus appeared in Judea. Such were his doctrines, enforced with a life of the most consummate virtue, that many who well knew the spirit and letter of prophecy, unitedly declared in the language of our text, *This is of a truth that Prophet who should come into the world.* It will, therefore, be worthy our employ, to bring forward some of those ancient prophecies which designated this

great Teacher sent from God, with their application to Jesus Christ; and show the manner in which he performs this interesting office to his people in all ages.

1. Moses said unto the children of Israel, *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken.* Of this many of the Jews were convinced; and beholding Jesus as a teacher, they glorified God, saying, *A great prophet is risen up among us, and God hath visited his people.* Jesus was raised up from among his brethren, a son of *Abraham* and of *David*, of the tribe of *Judah*, and born in *Bethlehem*, and thus an *Israelite* according to the flesh. Jesus was a prophet like unto *Moses*, called of God, faithful in his house, instructed the ignorant, and was to deliver his brethren from bondage. The disparity, however, was great; seldom did they hear *Moses*, and less did they obey him; but the instructions of Jesus, the better prophet, were to be effectual: *Him shall ye hear*; he spake as never *Moses* or any man spake; his words were clothed with divine authority, penetrating the heart of the most ignorant and rebellious, producing the fruit of virtue and honour. Besides, *Moses* was a teacher of the law, but *grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*, through which sinners are pardoned, and made meet for endless bliss.

The Messiah, according to *Isaiah lxi. 1*, was anointed of the Spirit of the Lord, to preach good tidings; proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and to comfort all that mourn. From this very text, Jesus preached on entering his ministry, *Luke iv. 14, 22*. Good tidings of salvation dropped from his lips and enriched the hearts of many, so that they glorified God for his visitation.

Besides, Messiah was prophesied to be an INTER-

PRETER, *one among a thousand*; and who alone was competent to declare unto men, who, by transgressions, were *going down to the pit, that God had found a ransom for their deliverance*. This, indeed, formed a material part of the instructions given by Jesus our invaluable prophet; and, what was a singular mark of his own excellence, altogether new and unparalleled in the world, he not only directed his disciples to look to him for instruction; but that he himself was to suffer, bleed, and die for their sins, and thus give his life a ransom to deliver them from the pit of destruction.

Concerning the great Prophet who was to come into the world, extraordinary miracles were to be performed by him in testimony of his mission. He was to make *the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and the dumb to speak*; with many other supernatural operations; all of which were performed by the word of Jesus; *and many believed on him as the Christ of God*.

The appearance of Jesus was by no means like that of Mahomet, the false prophet of Arabia, who never pretended to be a subject of prophecy, nor ventured to attest his doctrine by miracles; of course, to speak the most favourable of him, he was an intruder. But from what we have said of Jesus, it is evident his person, miracles, mission, and success as a prophet, were foretold some thousand years before his birth. Besides, the instruction of Jesus was to make men wiser and better; when the teaching of Mahomet, by his Koran, was evidently calculated to enflame the lusts of his followers, promote rapine, and make men seven-fold more the children of the devil. Let us then rejoice in the sublime character of Jesus, the great instructor of his Church, and learn with submission to be made wise unto everlasting life.

The subjects taught by Jesus Christ were the most interesting to the present and eternal felicity of men. The being and perfections of Jehovah—the care and benevolence of a superintending providence—the nature of man, with his obligation to God in his law—the depravity of the human heart by sin, and the necessity of conversion—the counsel of Jehovah, relative to his own person, mission, suffering, and death, for the purpose of redemption—the nature and blessedness of pardon, and the advantages of brotherly love and benevolence—death, judgment, heaven, and future punishment. These were some of the interesting subjects taught by Jesus; to which may be added, the nature of his own church and kingdom, detached from all civil powers, and purely spiritual; that baptism was an institution for the obedience of his disciples, and that his last supper was to be held as a perpetual memorial of his redeeming love, until his coming again to judge the world.

It was not only the province of a prophet to teach, but to foretel future events. Christ foretold the time, manner, place, circumstances, and design of his own sufferings and death; and also of the perfidious Judas, who was to sell his blood. Nor did he omit to inform Peter and other of his disciples the ungenerous conduct they should act by deserting him in the midst of his deepest sorrows, notwithstanding their present resolved attachment to his person. What was still more remarkable, he prophesied of the time and manner of his own resurrection from the dead, and of his return to the mansions of his Father as the fore-runner of his people.

To this likewise we not only add the predictions of Jesus, of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews; but, by his revelation to John in the Isle of

Patmos, the most capital events that should take place among the nations, for the purpose of gathering his Church ; many of which have been completed, and not one word which yet remains but shall be fulfilled to the praise of his glory !

2. The manner in which Jesus, the prophet of Israel, executes his office is worthy our attention. This was done personally, and more immediately in the three last years of his life, preaching salvation in Jerusalem, and all the regions round about. Persons of various ranks and degrees received his instruction, obeyed his holy precepts, bore a noble testimony against the practice of vice, and closed their lives in hope of a glorious immortality. His word was with power, it penetrated and changed the heart ; and of some of the most illiterate, and others of worldly dissipated lives, Jesus produced a race of disciples, so wise and so virtuous, the history of whom has never failed to create the most profound astonishment wherever the Gospel has been published. As a secondary mean to execute his prophetic office, Jesus commissioned many of his disciples to preach his word, promising them his presence, and rendered them successful in the instruction and conversion of thousands. The same Gospel mean is still continued ; Christ raises up men of every nation and language by the power of his grace, and thus in a rational and spiritual manner gathers sinners to himself, and progressively illuminates his Church with divine knowledge. Here, however, we must say, the written word of Christ, the Bible, is the invariable *law* and the *testimony*, received and published by all whom he employs to execute his prophetic office ; for if they speak not according to this word, we are positively assured *there is no light in them*. Men may be



converted to a party, but none were ever converted to Christ but by the power of his own *truth*. But the primary mean by which Jesus discharges the important office of a prophet is by the influence of his HOLY SPIRIT, without which, the written word and the preached Gospel are in vain. No more need be said upon this point than to recur to the promise of Christ to his disciples, *I will send you the Spirit of Truth, he shall teach you all things that I have said unto you.*

We might now close our remarks on the office of Jesus as a prophet, but it is absolutely necessary to assign the reason why Jesus is able to make men wise unto salvation. He is the infinitely WISE GOD, *The wisdom of God; the Word that was with God, and the Word that was God.* Therefore he can chase darkness from the mind, create the pure light of truth, and bring the carnal heart into the most spiritual obedience. Blessed be the Lord who is the light of his people, and who can bring the most distant sinner nigh to taste the sweets of redeeming love!

As a necessary improvement upon this subject, let us now ask, Have we ever received one instructive lesson from this great Teacher of Israel? Has he taught us to view ourselves as sinners, and are we assisted to look to him who is able to save to the uttermost? When Jesus opened the understanding of the disciples going to Emmaus, their *hearts burned within them*; and you may be certain, if the Lord hath enlightened your minds, you have enjoyed a degree of that comfort, peace, and joy, from a view of a complete salvation, which you can never forget. The promise is, *All thy people shall be taught of God, and great shall be the peace of thy children.* If this be the case, learn to make use of Jesus as your prophet. The

evils of your heart, the treachery of satan, the designs of his providence, the truth of his word, the privileges of Zion, the glories of eternity; these, with every other important subject which is your interest to know, Jesus will progressively reveal to your mind. You cannot be too sensible of your own ignorance, nor can you employ Jesus as your prophet too often. *Learn of me*, is his command; and our duty is, with Mary, to set at Christ's feet, and hear his words. Happy the man, happy the minister, and happy the family, who receive instruction from the Saviour! Conscious of my incapacity, unassisted, to promote your personal and domestic felicity, by this course of LECTURES, I devoutly implore the aid of Jesus, our divine Prophet, to render his own truth effectual to your instruction. Influenced by no name nor party, but the adored name of *Immanuel* and his ransomed flock, I deliver to you those sentiments, which, on mature investigation, I believe to be the TRUTH OF GOD: I despair not, therefore, of his gracious benediction upon you. Let us then look to Jesus, and resolve with David, *Thou, Lord, shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.* Amen.

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## LECTURE VIII.

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### THE LOVE OF LIFE MODERATED.

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JOB vii. 16.

*I would not live alway.*

Each moment draw from earth away  
My heart, that lowly waits thy call;  
Speak to my inmost soul, and say,  
I am thy love, thy God, thy all!  
To feel thy pow'r, to hear thy voice,  
To taste thy love, be all my choice.

THE love of life is natural to all men; and there are those awful attendants on death which make humanity tremble at the idea of dissolution. The possession of the grace of God, however, changes both the scenes of mortality and the state of the mind, so as to regulate the love of life, produce a subjection to the will of God, and attain the most charming and certain prospect of felicity beyond the grave. On a single glance upon our text, we may with certainty conclude that, as with *Job*, so with every good man, there are justifiable reasons why he would wish a continuance in life; but that there are also considerations more interesting and important, which preponderate against the love of life, and lead him to say, *I would not live alway*. It shall be our employ, in this discourse, to examine both these reasons, in some cheerful hope the subject may be beneficial to all who may hear.

1. Although the love of life be natural to all men, there are some more attached to the present state than others. Nay, we read of some who *through fear of death are all*

*their life-time subject to bondage.* This may be owing to the natural habit of the mind, and sometimes to the power of temptation. The best way, perhaps, for us to ascertain the desire and the lawfulness of the love of life, will be to examine a few of those relative connections which may induce persons to abide in this mortal state. PARENTS possessed of children, whether in infancy or youth, may lawfully wish a continuance in life to see their offspring virtuously educated, and placed in honourable and useful stations; especially, that their prayers may be answered, and the Lord endow their children with pardoning grace, and place them amongst the household of faith. The depravity natural to youth, and their incessant exposure to temptation, create a pious solicitude in parents to live to see them escape the pollutions that are in the world. For this they often pray, and drop the crystal tear. But it sometimes happens, that youth throw off all restraint, and plunge themselves into dissipation and ruin. In such afflictive cases the parents' hearts bleed, and their fervent cry to heaven is, "O spare us till we see thy mercy in restoring our children to virtue and to peace." Ah! my dear young friends, think seriously of the bitter pangs which disobedient youths create in their parents' breasts; and may heaven forbid you should join the wretched list; but, on the contrary, live to be your parents joy till life expires! CHRISTIANS having made a considerable profession of religion, by yielding to temptation, or drinking too deep of the spirit of the world, whereby they have lost the comforts they formerly enjoyed, may desire to have their days prolonged, till the joys of salvation be restored to their breasts. *O spare me a little, said David, that I may recover strength before I go hence, and*

*be no more.* Indeed, it is a subject of solemn reflection to backsliders, whether in heart or life, to be put to the bed of death in the dark, and not to be able to leave a testimony behind them for the satisfaction and the joy of survivors! Such, therefore, may well desire their span of life to be lengthened. In the circle of human society we see PERSONS elevated to conspicuous departments, and warmly engaged for the good of the community. Nor do we hope that we are destitute of such public persons who are also filled with piety as well as with the dignity of their station. Such were *Moses* and *Joshua*. Concerting their plans, and preparing the means for executing them, it cannot be deemed unlawful they should desire a continuance of life to see the fruit of their labour; especially, when the happiness of the people, and the honour of God and religion, are concerned. We live at a period big with events. While by faith we read the prophecies and the promises of God, relative to the destruction of error, the conversion of the heathen, and the call of the Jews, that the nations of the earth may become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ, the subject is so interesting, and the prospect so charming, it cannot be unlawful for GOOD MEN to desire to live, at least to see the *dawn*, though they may not expect to see the brightness of the *day*. Every year produces some new token of the second coming of Messiah; and it is a consideration which should inspire us with additional gratitude and joy, that we are the preserved of the Lord to see those unfoldings of his glory which many desired but saw them not. MINISTERS of the Gospel, let their denomination be what it may, are certainly justifiable in desiring length of days, to see the people of their charge established in truth and peace; especially to have the be-



nediction of the Lord upon their labours, to enjoy an harvest of souls, and the conversion of certain individuals for whom they may have often prayed with tears before the throne of God. Thus Paul, *I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better, but to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.*

From these, and many other reasons which might be named, good men may lawfully desire a continuance in life; especially as such persons will never fail to refer the issue, with cheerful resignation, to the pleasure of their heavenly Father. *Not my will, but thine be done.* Still there are considerations more valuable and important, which preponderate in favour of immortality, and lead them, with Job, to say, *I would not live alway.*

2. Let us now inquire into those considerations for which good men, notwithstanding their love of life, would wish to pass into a future state. They know that such a state of immortality and glory actually exists. They have been taught it from the Scriptures, and have had *an earnest of the inheritance* above granted to them by *the spirit of adoption.* Grace brings its own witness into the heart, both of its own excellence and its connection with eternal glory, so that we may confidently affirm *we have not believed a cunningly devised fable.* *We know,* said Paul, *if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* This happy assurance is every way sufficient to enable us to relinquish our earthly connections, to leave mortality behind, so that we may be *for ever with the Lord.*—A prospect of perfect freedom from every species of evil is another reason why good men are willing to part with life. Job knew the evil of suffering. Night and day he was bur-

dened with affliction, which made him cry out, *My soul chooseth death rather than life*. Under intense calamity, whether in our persons or in our connections, at the moment, we are apt to wish an immediate dismissal from the body. But, in a sedate, solemn frame of mind, we make a more correct statement of our suffering lives, and are willing to forsake them for their tendency to irritate our minds and lead us away from fellowship with God. From a sense of the evil of sin, stronger desires arise to quit this mortal stage. In a state of unregeneracy, the heart of man loves nothing but what is carnal and sensual; but when renewed by grace, sin is its greatest burden and highest disgust. The longer Christians live, the more practically will they be acquainted with the deceit, malignity, power, and vileness of sin. Entwined around their heart, mixing with all their duties, eclipsing their views of Christ and immortality, no wonder they desire not to live always, but to drop their evils, and wing their way where perfect holiness for ever shines, and an evil heart is known no more! We add, that the ultimate fruition of God and the Lamb, in glory, is a strong reason why the righteous would not live alway. *Father*, said Jesus, *I will, that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory*. I know of no single text that more charmingly describes the state of ultimate felicity. If to be with Christ *now* makes our heaven upon earth, what will be the possession of him hereafter? If to enjoy Jesus in the family and in the church, where we meet with so many interruptions and dark clouds, create our felicity, what shall be our bliss when we be transmitted where *he is*, set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high? And, if to behold

our Saviour through a glass darkly, fills us with such joy and peace in believing, what shall be the bliss when the glass shall be removed, and we behold his glory face to face? Such prospects the Gospel reveals, and such hope the grace of God inspires.

I have now shown you, in a few instances, the reasons why good men may desire a continuance in life, and likewise other considerations why they would not live away. Persons who have the exercise of these two classes of desires, may be said to regulate the love of life upon the most rational and solid principles. This interesting subject is practical, and demands our personal application. If it leaves us altogether unimpressed, it certainly indicates that hitherto we have made little good use of our time, and are as unfit to live as we are to die. It was well said, that "man is formed with two eyes, indicating he should have his mind employed upon the two states, time and eternity, for which he was created."

From the observations I have made, you must certainly perceive the great importance of being taught of God in order to moderate the cares of this transitory state; and likewise learn how exactly suited the Gospel is, under the influence of God, to regulate our desires in hope of futurity. It is my sincere wish you may receive such salutary impressions as shall lead you to that Saviour who has the keys of life and death, that from him you may derive pardon, peace, and eternal joy. Possessed of these, you will not only be supported through this changing world, but be able to form a correct estimate of life, and to make a proper use of it, in prospect of a state of bliss that knows no end! Thus you will find *to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Amen.

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## LECTURE IX.

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### UNION BETWEEN CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.

JOHN xv. 5.

*I am the vine, ye are the branches.*

Jesus, immutably the same,  
Thou true and living vine,  
Around thy all supporting stem  
My feeble arms I twine.

Grafted in thee, by grace alone  
In growth I daily rise,  
And rais'd on this foundation stone,  
My top shall reach the skies.

A. M. T.

UNIVERSAL nature and true reason teach us the reality of our union to God, as he is the author of our existence, in whom we live, move, and have our being. But, it is not in the power either of nature or reason to teach us how, as sinful, fallen creatures, we can enjoy a union with God, for our restoration, pardon, peace, and everlasting felicity. On this interesting point Revelation alone affords us information. It directs us to the harmony of the divine attributes, in the counsel, covenant, redemption, and grace, existing between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of saving sinners, and bringing them into fellowship with God in life, and to the bliss of eternity! In the language of Scripture, this union is currently declared to be IN CHRIST, as our *Head, Bridegroom, and Vine*; the latter of which is selected for your present meditation, it being the condescension of Jesus to teach us the nature, and benefit of interest in him, by those emblems which are most familiar to our senses.

The vine in its appearance is extremely weak and far from engaging the admiration of a beholder, yet bears the richest clusters of fruit, the most delicious to the taste, and, when compressed, yields a liquid at once medicinal and exhilarating. By this emblem Jesus directs us to himself, who, in the general estimation of a wicked world, has *no form nor comeliness in him that he should be desired*; yet, in himself, is *the plant of renown*. He possessed celestial fruit in moral life; and especially as a *Mediator*, being pressed in the wine-press of his Father's wrath, yields the richest wine of salvation to the vilest of sinners. Look to Calvary; on that spot grew this living vine; there the fruit of pardon, peace, and everlasting life are found in richest abundance! Though cut down by death, the vine yet lives in that better paradise where the fruit thereof is ever new. It is worthy of attention that Jesus asserts himself to be the *true* vine, probably to distinguish himself from those characters frequently described in the ancient writings of Scripture by *the empty vine*, and the *wild vine*; but especially as he is that vine, that blessed Saviour, appointed by the Father, and yielding such precious fruit, that whosoever receives thereof finds *true* peace and happiness in God, and in the issue shall by no means be deceived of an hope of everlasting blessedness in heaven.

Presuming these remarks to be familiar with you, I shall now claim your attention to a few select observations on the nature of that UNION which subsists between CHRIST and his CHURCH, including every INDIVIDUAL MEMBER, which is suggested under the emblem of VINE AND BRANCHES, sincerely wishing it may prove instructive to all who hear.



1. You will doubtless acknowledge that the *stock*, or stem of the vine, does in itself virtually possess every bud, bough, branch, or fruit, afterwards to be produced; and also that the vine must certainly exist prior to any branch that should appear upon it. This teaches us the truth which we so often read in plain language, *Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* This, no doubt, was the act of the Father, whom Jesus calls the *Husband-man*, and to whom Jesus said, concerning the people he should redeem and enjoy, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.* Here, as in the vine and the branch, Christ and his people have an early union. And as the stock progressively produces buds and branches until it be in a state of perfection; so Jesus, under different administrations, the Old and New Testament, in various climes, and at different periods of time, puts forth his people to view, by regeneration and conversion, and will continue so to do until every individual soul in him shall be made manifest, and this true and living vine be eternally complete in all its branches. The branch, therefore, does not more stand indebted to the vine for its existence, than every real Christian to his union in Christ for his state, comfort, and prospects, as a child of God. No soul regenerated, none brought to spiritual life, but by virtue of Christ's union and vivifying power. Every believer, grace, virtue, gift, all proceed from Jesus, as the bud, the blossom, and the branch proceed from the stem. While this humbles the sinner, and makes him a debtor to grace, it exalts the character of Jesus, and lays a sure foundation for gratitude and praise. This view of the union between Christ and his people is a

source of great encouragement to Churches, and to Ministers in unsuccessful times of preaching the Gospel, and should lead them to look to Jesus, the true vine, to put forth his own buds and branches; possessing at the same time a conviction that those who may profess christianity, without union with Christ, will prove unfruitful indeed. Equal consolation may be derived from this subject by the Christian, under all his darkness of mind and imperfections of heart. Look to Jesus; rooted and grounded in him you will feel the influence of this life flowing into your soul, as the vital sap of the vine to the branch; and thus you will be more abundantly fruitful in every good word and work.

2. THE VINE AND BRANCHES MAKE ONE TREE. This observation conducts our mind to the Scriptures, in which we learn that Christ and his people are *one*. In other language, they are *flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone*. *I ascend*, said Jesus, *unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God*. As one vital sap runs through the whole tree, and, by consequence, makes every bud, leaf, bough, and branch, one with itself; so it is with Christ and his people; one salvation, one interest, one life, one hope, and all directed to one grand end—the glory of God! It is also worthy your observation, that the vine and branches are *one* in a state of suffering. Let the lightning flash, the thunder roar, and the tempest beat, whatever may be suffered by the branches, is equally felt by the vine. Hence it is so excellently said by the prophet, *In all their afflictions he is afflicted*. As Jesus and his people are *one* in this life, so they will be *one* in the next. For this Jesus prayed to his Father, *that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us*.

*I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* Glorious union! Let our souls experience it in time, and we will praise the Lord for it in eternity!

3. VINE AND BRANCHES GROW IN THE SAME SOIL. Jesus lay in the bosom of his Father, and by virtue of union with him, as his branches, draws virtue from the same source for their existence, fruitfulness, and honour. God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. *Thou hast loved them*, said Jesus to his Father, *as thou hast loved me. I have declared thy word, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.* Remember, therefore, that this is the source from whence all the joys and b'essedness of the Christian is derived. To this we must stand indebted, or remain as unfruitful as the branch that is severed from the vine, and only fit for destruction. Let us then listen to the voice of Jesus, in the 9th verse of this chapter, *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.*

4. THE BRANCHES BEAR THE SAME FRUIT IN KIND WITH THE VINE. It cannot be otherwise. *Wisdom is justified of her children.* The life of Christ is manifest in us. The truth, as it is in Jesus; the temper he discovered to his friends and his foes; and especially, his moral obedience, in a proportionate degree will be found in all his disciples. And I cannot but add, that as the flavour of the grape is derived from the virtue, and designates the quality of the vine, so the sentiments, temper, and obedience of those who are disciples of Jesus indeed, will always bear the rich flavour of his life and character, in opposition to the wild grapes of heathen morality, or the sour grapes of error. Never let us forget that Jesus hath said, *He that abideth in me,*

*and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit ; and herein is my Father glorified.* Before men, we have an indisputable right to exercise the dictate of conscience ; but, we must at the same time religiously observe, that we are not to create our own opinions, nor follow the dictate of our own spirits, but to take all from Christ, see that every sentiment and every temper bears the impressive image of the Lord Jesus.

5. THE LIFE OF THE VINE SECURES THE LIFE OF THE BRANCHES. Christ is, indeed, the true and *living* vine. Because I live, ye shall live also. Your life is hid with Christ in God. He that believeth in me shall not die eternally. Were it possible for the stem to fail, or the root to decay, the branches must inevitably perish. Or, were it possible that the branch could be severed from the vine, death would be equally certain. Neither of these can take place, for Jesus ever lives ; the union between his Godhead and manhood, together with the nature of that endless life he received on his resurrection from the dead, announce to us a Redeemer that liveth, *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever ;* the fountain of life, ever full, and ever flowing for the felicity of his people ! Nor can the people of the Lord be separated from Jesus ; he hath declared, *None shall pluck them out of my hand ; no weapon formed against them shall prosper,* to separate them as branches from the living vine. The wisdom, power, grace, and love of Jehovah, formed the union between the branches and the vine ; the same attributes are engaged to preserve it ; and this union shall issue to the praise and the glory of God for ever ! This makes christianity worth possessing. If the foundations were destroyed, what could the righteous do ? Thanks be to God for such a permanent

basis for our hope of immortality, and for a source of evangelical life, by which we may be meetned to enjoy him for ever more !

The great question now to be determined by us is, Are we branches of this living vine ? A profession of christianity without an union with Jesus will be of no avail. The branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine ; it is unprofitable, and only fit for fuel ; neither can you bear the fruit of holiness, the end of which is everlasting life, except ye abide in Jesus. Let us tremble at the idea of being found false and dead branches ! Be incessant in prayer with Jesus for his Spirit to teach you your interest in him, and to give you to live on the influence of his grace. Those who are persuaded of their interest, have a source of great gratitude and joy ! It is wholly owing to this gracious union you have ever tasted the sweets of redemption, and amidst the events of your life, are preserved unto this day. Plead for more of the virtue of the vine to render you still more fruitful, and in a little while you shall experience a union with Jesus in glory for ever !



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## LECTURE X.

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### *AFFLICTIONS FATHERLY CHASTISEMENTS.*

DEUT. viii. 5.

*Thou shalt consider in thine heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.*

Afflictions do not come alone,  
A voice attends the rod;  
By both he to his saints is known,  
A Father and a God.

*Newton.*

SIN hath strowed the path of man with numberless sorrows. This is the lot of every class, and in every department of life. To afford consolation to sufferers was one design of ancient philosophers in drawing their pens. But, it must be confessed, the sacred WRITINGS afford us the most ample information of the causes, variety, and intention of human sufferings; and, at the same time, open those sources of consolation which have been found adequate to support us under the most extreme distresses. We are taught from our text to consider the dispensation of God to us under our calamities, as a necessary argument for resignation and relief; and I am persuaded, when we can duly ascertain the relation and the conduct of God to us, we cannot but submit to his wise disposal in all the events of time. It is therefore presumed, that a discourse on the principle from which God afflicts his people, with the nature, necessity, and advantages of considering it, may not be unacceptable.

1. Let us examine the principle on which God acts towards his people in the afflictive dispensations of his providence. Not as a *judge* towards a condemned criminal. True, all the Lord's people are sinners; they are *by nature children of wrath, even as others*; but it is equally true that Jesus their Redeemer hath answered every demand of the law against them in his own person; and they stand completely justified in his righteousness, and pardoned in his blood; so that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*. This truth is of the highest importance for you to know; there is, therefore, no wrath in God's chastisement of his people, not a single grain is put into the cup of their affliction, for God is fully satisfied in the obedience of his Son, and can never be said to require double satisfaction; besides, were he to give any man the just wages of one sin, it would be death, and inevitably sink him down in black despair. The words of our text, therefore, correspond with the general current of the Bible, to teach us that the principle on which God afflicts his people is not judicial, but *parental*. *As a man chasteneth*, not his ENEMIES, nor his SLAVES, but *his son*. Let the afflicted man first make good his title and interest as a child of God, and new light will appear upon all the dispensations of Providence towards him; he will then be convinced that all things, however afflictive, do even in the present time, as well as in future, work together for his good. It cannot be otherwise. The Father hath loved such with an everlasting love, secured his salvation by union of interest in his Son Jesus, promised all needful and sufficient grace, and prepared mansions above for him, where no sin nor sorrow shall invade. If a son then and heir, heir of God, and joint heir with Jesus.

Christ; can God deal in wrath with such? Impossible. And so far from God's having exchanged the rod of his wrath for the rod of chastisement being an argument to lead to licentiousness, it will humble the heart, and lead to obedience. Learn, therefore, to make the necessary distinction between vindictive wrath and fatherly chastisement.—I shall add two or three other reflections upon this parental principle mentioned in the text, and on which all the dealings of God to his people are founded: for what person, or what family, though at present exempt from sufferings, may not, ere they are aware, be enveloped in calamity, and need the utmost consolation from the hand of God and man!

As a prudent, affectionate father chastiseth his son, not for wanton pleasure, nor malice in his own heart, but for folly in the child; so God never afflicts willingly the children of men; and, a *needs be* is always to be discovered in his parental chastisements. Although the sufferings of God's people are not penal; that is, that there is no wrath in them, and that the cup which the Saviour puts into their hand is very different from that which he drank for their sake; yet the procuring cause is sin. Moses, for the sin of his lips, was denied an entrance into Canaan. David, for the sin of his heart, procured an abiding sword in his house. Jonah, for his disobedience, was cast into the sea. And Peter, for denying his Master, was bathed in tears. Yet the chastisement of God to each of those persons was in love, purposely designed as medicinal, and evidently in the issue promoted their good. A wise parent, both as to his judgment and his feelings, can accurately distinguish between his child and his fault; and while he chastises from an hatred to his folly and disobedience, he has the most sensible emotions of love

and of pity to the offspring of his bowels. It is equally so with our EVERLASTING FATHER in his conduct to his children of grace. Read the Bible—mark the characters whom God hath loved—tell me then, from the history of their lives, whether God hath not, from this very parental principle, *scourged every son whom he receiveth*? I shall only add, an affectionate father chastiseth his disobedient son with a sanguine expectation of producing reformation. And, concerning the fatherly chastisements of God, we may safely say, *the fruit of all is to take away sin*. Not to make atonement for sin; that has been done by Christ; but when we indulge an undue attachment to the world, inordinately love the creature, neglect our positive duties, or in any way gratify the corrupt passions of our fallen nature, God sends such afflictions in kind, weight, and measure, as shall answer the end of taking away from us the love of sin, teach us that our God is holy, and saith, *My son, give me thine heart*. Under such chastisement we mourn our folly, hate our sins, fly from them, and return like sensible prodigals to the arms of our compassionate Father.

These observations I think I may sum up in the words of the Lord to David concerning his son Solomon: *I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him*. Let us then adore our heavenly Father, justify his ways with man, fly from the appearance of evil, and render obedience to his holy will!

2. We are to recommend the important duty of *considering* this parental principle on which God chasteneth his children. We all know the influence of affliction

upon the human mind; sometimes a stupor is created, and at other times the breast is irritated, and the sufferer thinks, like Jonah, he does well to be angry. And as it is with individuals, so with families. By the loss of property, the introduction of sickness, or by the death of relatives, the sufferers pour upon the wound which is made, and their grief is accumulated. As the heart of man is naturally rebellious against God, satan takes the advantage of our sufferings as he did in the case of Job, to tempt us to presume or to despair. To remedy these evils we are exhorted to the duty of *consideration*, in which the mind is directed from the calamity to that God who ordereth all things after the counsel of his own will, and who hath designs of mercy and goodness in the affliction of his children. The nature of this exhortation should be duly observed. *Consider in thine heart*; that is, let the work be done sincerely and attentively, with the soul most solemnly engaged with God, and not take a transient superficial view of your afflictions. It is not improper that the cause, instruments, progress, and consequences of your sorrows should make a part of your investigation; but, you must remember that this will never afford ease to the heart. The most important thing is for you to read your interest in your heavenly Father's love, and to be persuaded that his dealings with you flow from that principle; then cheerful submission will arise in your breast, you will read your Father's will in every thing around you, and you will adopt the language of your Saviour, *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* The more you consider this in your heart, the more you will be drawn from the love of sin, an attachment to the world, and an ardent desire to



lay up all your good in God; perhaps not improperly expressed in this language :

All my own schemes and self design

I to thy better will resign.

Impress this deeply on my breast

That I'm in thee, already blest.

I am equally certain that such an heart consideration of this subject will have a charming influence upon your hope for immortality. You will thereby practically learn, that *our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* When he hath tried me, said Job, *he will bring me forth as gold.* In the furnace you will lose nothing but your dross, and the more of that the better. You will learn to hold the world by a slender thread, that when death shall break it, you will feel little pain or regret. He who hath loved you and supported you under your numberless sorrows, will assuredly bear up your soul in the last conflict of death, and receive you to mansions of eternal repose.

Having dismissed the subject, perhaps it may not be unappropriate to conclude our discourse by saying, that the interest of the human soul in the love of God may be learned with the greatest certainty from the temper, confidence, and submission it possesses under sufferings. A man in easy circumstances of life, surrounded with caressing friends, may easily maintain a public profession of religion, and pass current for a good man, while he possibly may be a stranger to a changed heart. The real Christian also, in seasons of repose and affluence,

finds great difficulty to possess indisputable evidence of his interest in Jesus; we are of the earth earthy; our corrupt nature loves worldly security; and the greater abundance of ease, the less grace, faith, and patience have to operate upon. For this reason it was that a very valuable Christian under prosperity expressed the sensibility of his heart in the following lines:

Whene'er becalm'd I lie,  
And storms forbear to toss;  
Be thou, dear Lord, still nigh,  
Lest I should suffer loss:  
For more the treacherous calm I dread,  
Than tempests bursting o'er my head.

The case of a man in the furnace of affliction is different from both those which I have named; disappointed in the world, bereft of dear pledges of earthly love, surrounded with foes, and his own heart the seat of temptation; if such an one be possessed of grace, this is the time when its influence will be felt in leading him to repose in God, and bear the fruit of humility and patience before man. Thus the trial of faith is more precious than gold, which perisheth. The evidences of God's love obtained in the furnace are more sensible and permanent than those received in any other way. David never wrote better than when he dipped his pen in the black ink of affliction; and when God removed the creature from his embraces, his soul could with more ardour exclaim, *O God, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise!* Beloved Joseph, too, has left this testimony for our attention: *The Lord hath made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.* And, upon the whole, we

may say, in the language of inspiration, *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons.* Upon a point of such magnitude, permit me to beseech you to examine the temper and state of your heart when under calamity. Ask, Do I kiss the rod, adore the hand, and justify the ways of God in my sufferings? Can I say that I am more happy in God than I can be in all which the world calls good and great? Stripped of all things else, do I embrace the Saviour as my never failing, present, and eternal portion? If so, be assured your sufferings are in love; they yield you a token for God, and shall work together for your highest interest and the glory of your Lord!

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## LECTURE XI.

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### SLEEP AN EMBLEM OF THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

ACTS vii. 60.

*He fell asleep.*

Forbear, my soul, to weep like those  
Who can't in Christ their hope repose,  
And of his victory sing:  
For those who in the Saviour sleep,  
The Lord eternally will keep,  
And safely with him bring.

B.

THIS is said of *Stephen* to express the serenity of his mind, the solidity of his faith, and the repose of his soul in God, while his enemies were stoning him to death. The God of grace, who hath ever distinguished between the lives of the righteous and those of the wicked, continues that distinction unto death. Therefore it is, that while the impenitent *die the death*; that is, death in all its terrible nature and consequences, the believer is described as *falling asleep*. In this Lecture I shall explain to you a few reasons, why the death of the righteous is described under the emblem of sleep. And may the benediction of God crown my efforts with success.

1. SLEEP is the *shadow*, and not the *substance* of death. There is nothing which nature possesses; no change or state incident to man that so strongly exhibits the state of death as sleep. For although the person under the power of sleep has his senses suspended, and bears the highest appearance of death, yet he still exists in animal life; he is not really dead. This perfectly

corresponds with the nature of the death of the righteous taught by Jesus. *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.* The nature of death to them that believe is astonishingly changed; so that eternal life shall be their portion. As this is a subject of such great importance, I will explain to you the manner how this change is produced.

Death was one of those enemies with whom the Son of God came to combat and to destroy, for the sake of his people. Death is *the king of terrors*. He ascended his throne on the commission of transgression. *By sin came death.* Death has reigned from Adam to Moses, down to the present hour. Sin has armed death with an envenomed sting, which receives its force from the holiness and justice of that divine law which we have so repeatedly transgressed. Christ, by the shedding of his blood, satisfied divine justice, and thus disarmed death of his sting. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.* And although he entered the territories of the grave, it was to vanquish death in his own dominions, and then to arise to demonstrate the perfection of his redemption, and that he was *the Son of God with power*. Thus we are assured *our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.* In the obedience, sufferings, and death of Jesus, the law of God is honoured, its penalties satisfied, death conquered, mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other.

I said sleep was the *shadow*, not the *substance* of death. A shadow you know is the faint resemblance of a substance produced by a luminous body shining upon



it. Thus the shadow of a tree is formed on the earth by the rays of the sun or moon shining upon it. Now, Christ, the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, shines upon death, whom he hath conquered, and the shadow only remains for the righteous to pass. And what is more admirably expressive of that shadow than sleep? Well might David say, *Though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.*

Give me leave now to assure you, that it is of the highest consequence for you to obtain an appropriating knowledge of the conquest of death by the Son of God. It certainly forms a material part of the experience and hope of the righteous. The death of Christ *for* sin lays the foundation of conversion *from* sin. We must either meet the *substance* of death clothed with inconceivable terror, or pass through its *shadow* by faith in the Son of God. The Bible assures of no peaceful death, but of those who *die in the Lord*, and *sleep in Jesus*. United by faith to the Saviour's person, your sins washed in his blood, your soul covered with his righteousness, and enriched with his grace; these Gospel realities, made known to you by the light and power of the Holy Ghost, can alone form the basis of a certain hope of meeting death as a friend, to conduct you to bliss. Then, with confidence and triumph you may say, *To me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* And when your time of departure shall arrive, you shall feel no more evil than passing through the shade of an ample grove, or reclining in softest slumbers.

2. SLEEP is the well known medium of rest after the labour of the day is ended. Such rest the Christian anticipates by sleeping in Jesus, when he shall close this

mortal life of sin and sorrow. Life is a journey, attended by numberless cares. The children of God, as they have a new life, so they have a new path to tread, of which the world are unacquainted. Under the weighty experience of this, Job, when pointing to the grave, exclaimed, *There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest.* The life of man at best is a laborious day; but the life of a Christian is more abundantly so. In common with other men, they have their losses, disappointments, and vexations. In the circle of their own breast, they have a seat of greater sorrow. The remains of a depraved nature, an heart prone to depart from the God they wish to love, unnumbered temptations, which, like arrows from the infernal regions, produce such extreme labour and sorrow, were they not supported by the power of the Saviour, they would sink in despair! God, however, has provided ample support, and though faint, they are enabled to pursue. In this tabernacle they groan, being burdened; and the hope they possess of immortality makes them ardently desire to depart and to be with Christ in glory, which, as Paul expresses it, *is far better.* Truly just is the observation of Solomon, *The sleep of the labouring man is sweet.* This is eminently realized in the death of the righteous, who are favoured with such views of death, as unstung by the death of Christ, that with the prophet Isaiah, they look upon death as *a bed*, on which they shall rest. Some of you may have your fears, how it shall be with you, in a dying hour. Remember, God hath said, *At evening time it shall be light.* He, said Jesus, *that followeth after me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* Let me, therefore, exhort you to follow near the Saviour, carry the cross of

affliction with patience, and trust him for illuminating grace, whenever he shall put you to the bed of death. *As thy day, thy strength shall be.* With dying Stephen you shall see the heavens open, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God to receive you. Then, let the time, the place, the external circumstances of your death be what they may, you shall embrace your happy rest, and know what it is to fall asleep in Jesus!

3. A time to go to sleep you know is a time of UN-DRESS; the apparel of the day is thrown off. Such a time of undress is the dying hour! To a thoughtless youth, a busy worldling, or an old sinner, this must prove an alarming undressing time indeed! Not the gay apparel only which may have elated their pride, and introduced them into the paths of dissipation; but all their false hopes, their associates, their very flesh, must submit to be undressed by the cold hand of death: *For naked came we into this world, and naked must we go out of it.* But, what adds to the solemnity of sinners' undress by death, is that their souls, more naked than their bodies, must pass away without a righteousness to stand in judgment before the tribunal of the great God. Solemn thought indeed! if sufficiently received, would make the stoutest heart to tremble, and seek a covering by that glorious *robe of righteousness* provided by Jesus, of which death, in no possible form, can rob the possessor.

To a Christian, however, this time of undress is received in a very different manner. Paul said, when in near prospect of his death, *Shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.* So far from the robes of mortality being torn off with regret or despair, Christians cordially undress, and

lay down to sleep in Jesus. It is indeed, a very desirable time of undress. The body, subject to numberless diseases, and the heart clogged with depravity, which often have produced the briny tear, like a ragged garment, is thrown aside. O that we could more frequently realize this solemn, delightful subject! How alleviating would it be under the burdens of life, and how reconciling to our last moments! At any rate, let our undressing every evening for rest, prove a monitor for our minds.

Think, O my soul, the time is near,  
 When thou must put off mortal clay;  
 Naked before thy God appear  
 When earth beneath thee melts away.

O may I now put off my sin,  
 The works of darkness cast aside;  
 When stripp'd of all, through Jesus clean,  
 Death, judgment, and thy bar abide.

4. On retiring to bed and embracing sleep, we are accustomed to indulge an expectation of enjoying a refreshing MORNING, AND A NEW DAY. Such is sleep in Jesus. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But our hope penetrates eternity. He that raised up Jesus from the dead, will raise us up also. Sleeping in Jesus we shall pass through the night of death, and behold the bright morning of the resurrection to an eternal state of bliss. Although our bodies moulder into dust, they shall not be annihilated; for Christ shall change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto his own glorious body. This will



be a morning without clouds, in which Jesus will appear in the brightness of his glory as the bridegroom of his Church, to whom he will in charming accents say, *Arise, my fair one, and come away*—"Come from the slumbers of the grave—come from the shades of corruption, no more to sin nor groan beneath the load of guilt and sorrow—come to me, behold my glory, set down on my throne, partake of my joys, and dwell in my presence for ever!" In the faith and hope of this happy period, may each of us with David say, *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.*

5. The refreshment of your sleep, and the security of our persons through the unseen dangers of the night, are owing to the GUARDIANSHIP of the ALMIGHTY. It is with equal pleasure we declare that our preservation in the grave, and our awaking in the bright morning of the resurrection, are wholly owing to the watchful care of the Lord Jesus, who is *the resurrection and the life*. Nor have we reason to question the faith of David in both instances, when he formed that pious resolution, *I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou Lord only maketh me to dwell in safety*. How willing, how composed was he; not driven, not cast down by an enemy's hand, nor by a terrifying conscience; but reclined in peace with God, and all mankind! 'Then, sleep in Jesus on the bed of death, in hope of rising again in the morning light, and be admitted to the presence of God, where are pleasures for evermore.

I have now shown you the reasons why the death of the righteous is compared to sleep. It is the shadow and not the substance of death; it is the medium of rest; a time of undress; it anticipates a bright morning, and is



enjoyed under the guardian care of the Almighty. I must now intreat you to apply the subject to yourselves. We must either meet the substance of death clothed in his terrors, or pass his shadow as conquered by Jesus. There is no alternative. If you live in your sins, and despise the Saviour, your latter end cannot be peace. May you seriously determine this important point before you pass to an eternal world ! If, however, you are so happy as to possess an interest in Jesus as your Saviour and friend, you need not yield to fear. Christ will smile upon you, and you shall smile upon death. Leave the event with your Lord, who hath said, *I will never leave you, nor forsake you.* I therefore conclude, with the animating address of Dr. Horne : “ Behold, O Christian, and let faith teach thee how to sleep, and how to die ; while it assures thee, that as sleep is a short death, so death is only a long sleep ; and that the same God watches over thee in thy bed and in thy grave. Happy indeed, the Christian, who nightly commits himself to his bed as to his grave ; for at last he shall resign himself to his grave as to his bed ; in expectation that he shall arise and sing a morning hymn with the children of the resurrection.”

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## LECTURE XII.

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### *THE LIVELY CHRISTIAN.*

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PSALM CXIX. 175.

*Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee.*

Intense, O! let me for thy glory burn,  
Nor fruitless view my days and months return.  
Give me with wonder at thy works to glow,  
To grasp thy vision, and thy truths to know;  
O'er time's tempestuous sea to reach thy shore,  
And live and sing where time shall be no more.

IF this psalm be remarkable for its length, it is much more so for the variety and spirituality of the sentiments which it contains. The excellent Mr. James Harvey justly called it, "The anatomy of the heart." In the petition of the text we cannot believe David to have been altogether destitute of spiritual life in his soul; for the desires, prayers, and exercises expressed throughout the whole psalm are peculiar to those only who are made alive to God, by the Spirit of Messiah. But the words express an ardent desire that he might enjoy the vigour and comforts of life, in greater devotedness to God, honour to his cause, and the praise of his glory. This, I presume to believe, is the desire of every Christian, let his denomination be what it may. To be made *alive* in Christ, is both our safety and our happiness; but to be *lively Christians* honours God, stimulates others, and renders us more useful in the Church, the family, and in the world. In this Lecture I shall attempt to show you the principles, source, and exercises which constitute a lively Christian, and then follow him through some of

the more visible paths of his life, in order to observe the expressions of his vivacity, in hope, through the benediction of God, we may imitate his example.

That some professors of religion *have a name to live, whilst they are dead*, is as apparent from their sentiments and conduct, as from the testimony of Scripture. We cannot expect those to be *lively* who never were made *alive*. A man may become a member of the most regular constituted church on earth, and enjoy much of the breath of popular applause; but if the Spirit of God does not regenerate his soul, he must for ever remain a stranger to those principles and exercises which characterize a lively Christian. A Christ professed without a Christ enjoyed, can be of no more satisfaction than a well-spread table without an appetite to eat.

The constant influence of the Holy Spirit, who is the sanctifier, guide, sealer, and comforter of the children of God, must be enjoyed by you in order to produce those principles and exercises of heart which will make you lively Christians; he is, therefore, styled *The Spirit of life from Christ Jesus*. Without air neither animal nor vegetable life can possibly be maintained; and if good air be essential to free respiration and health, we are confident that we daily need the vivifying influence of the Spirit to cheer our minds, invigorate our graces, and conduct us in the path of obedience, with an healthy, lively soul. Was Paul a lively, animated Christian; happy in himself, and useful to others? He exhorts you, from his own experience, to *live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*. His divine influence shall make you lively in flying from the least appearance of evil, and cheerfully to love and obey your Saviour. Instead, therefore, of *quenching* and

*grieving* the Spirit, pray for his more abundant influence, and your souls shall live with greater joy, and praise the Lord.—*To live by faith on the Son of God* forms another principle of action to a lively Christian. You are sensible that your animal life cannot be maintained without its daily bread; nor can you be growing, lively Christians without constantly feeding, by faith, upon Jesus, who is the true bread that cometh down from heaven, and of which, if a man eat, he shall live for ever. As the natural bread you eat incorporates with your animal system, strengthening, satisfying, and invigorating you for the discharge of daily labour; much more so when you are enabled by *faith* to feed upon Christ, the bread of life, you happily feel an union with him in his person and grace, and are strengthened both to do and to suffer the whole will of God with cheerfulness and joy. *Blessed is the man that eateth this bread in the kingdom of God!*—To preserve an abiding sense of your *reconciliation* to God, the complete *pardon* of your sins in the blood of Jesus, and an assurance of your *justification* in his all-perfect righteousness, will most assuredly produce that joy, peace, and happiness which will make you lively Christians indeed! These great realities were formed in the heart of Paul; and whoever reads his life or his epistles will find, that from them he enjoyed the most abundant pleasures. The knowledge and possession of these blessings of grace were not peculiar to Paul only. All the disciples of Jesus possessed them in a great or lesser degree. They were all sinners in themselves, and so are you. The same God who bestowed such blessings on them, is as able and willing to confer them upon you, that your souls may live in assured peace and joy to praise his holy name; for you cannot be lively while you

are conscious your sins are unpardoned.—To experience a sense of your *adoption*, and to know and enjoy God in Christ as your everlasting *Father*, will most effectually raise the powers of your souls, and conduct you through the paths of life with joy. From your adoption you obtain a right to enjoy the invaluable privileges of the family of grace, and are enabled to maintain communion with God in private and public. On the exercise of this principle almost the whole of your comfort depends. While fear occupies your breast, whether God in Christ be your Father, it is not possible you should be either lively or happy: be therefore earnest in prayer for the spirit of adoption to bear witness with your spirits that you are the children of God. While I thus affectionately address you, I hope you are darting a silent petition to heaven—

My Father! O permit my heart  
To plead her humble claim,  
And ask the bliss those words impart  
In my Redeemer's name.

The last principle I shall now name, as producing lively exercises of heart, is a confidence, that die when or where you may, you shall inherit the eternal mansions of bliss in heaven. This is what Peter calls a *lively hope*; the possession of which cannot fail to make a lively Christian. Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God on earth and in heaven, made a considerable part of the experience of Paul, and had a happy influence upon his heart and life. Knowing in whom he had believed, he was cheerfully persuaded that neither death nor life, things present nor things to come, should be able to se-



parate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and that there was a crown of glory laid up for him in heaven, which the Lord would give him in the great day. Blessed hope! in the possession of which may your souls live to praise the Lord.

I have now named some of the most important *principles*, the exercise of which can make you humble, lively, happy Christians. It becomes your duty to examine yourselves if they have a place in your breasts, and in what degree they are operative on your temper and conduct. Much may be said as to the natural texture of the mind; some are of a much more lively disposition than others; still, if we have those Gospel principles implanted by the hand of God, they will be found influential. If they are not so much as our hearts can wish, let the conviction lead us in prayer to God, who alone can *revive his work*, that our souls may live in the experience of his love, and be animated in his cause. In hope God may pervade our further meditations, I shall proceed, according to my promise, to follow the Christian through some few paths of his life, in order to observe the expressions of his vivacity.

IN THE FAMILY. Whatever be his relation or station in domestic life, the animating virtues of christianity will discover themselves, and, as a lively Christian, resolve, with David, *to walk within his house with a perfect heart*. While grace curbs and brings into subjection those tempers, passions, and vices which are so often destructive to social harmony, it will produce that humility, courteousness, sobriety, integrity, and amiableness which make the possessor happy in himself, and useful to all around. Such a person may be truly said to be *diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*.

In his walk in the WORLD, the lively Christian is *taken knowledge of that he hath been with Jesus*. Integrity and uprightness preserves him from those temptations which are too often found in trade and in commerce. Cheerful as well as just, he gives no one occasion to charge his religion with deceit, injustice, or incoseness. While he gives an industrious hand to the world, he preserves a warm heart for his adored Saviour; and when often he is employed in his station on earth, he has his *conversation in heaven*.—In the CLOSET he is no stranger to himself, to meditation, examination, and sensible communion with his God. Here he contemplates his wretched, guilty state as a sinner, and is clothed with humility, while he reflects on the free, rich, unbounded grace of God which saved his soul from hell. The sufferings of his Saviour in Gethsemane, and on Calvary, make such sensible impressions upon his heart, that they produce tears of gratitude and joy. In this secret chamber of prayer he gathers the heavenly manna on which his soul feeds, and is strengthened to pass the duties and the sufferings of the day. Being no stranger to himself or his God in private, no wonder that he bears his public profession with activity and zeal.—Follow him, therefore, in the HOUSE OF OUR GOD. Here the emotions of his heart are ardently engaged in prayer and in praise. He enjoys the sweets of communion with the *Father* and with the *Son*, by the aid of the eternal *Spirit*. By *faith* he hears the word preached, and is profited. Though not captious in his temper, he forms a Gospel taste, knows the voice of truth, and *approves things that are excellent*. He dwells in *unity* with his brethren, and with a generous heart and hand strives to promote the good of all. Although we allow the lively Christian a

degree of that partiality which is attached to his own denomination, his heart embraces all who love and bear the image of his Lord and Saviour, ardently desiring to promote the spread of the Gospel and the comfort of Christians wherever he may find them. Nor will his lively, affectionate heart forget unhappy sinners. Of such he was himself. Pure grace has made the difference. He prays for them—he longs to see them flock to Jesus, as doves to their windows. Thus the love and benevolence of the animated Christian, like the beams of the sun, find their way among all ranks and orders of mankind, till they traverse from pole to pole.—In DEATH the lively Christian appears the most brilliant and happy. His knowledge and experience of the Saviour have assured him that death to him is without a sting; and in the black river of death he shall drop all the evils of life, and, like the Egyptian host, be seen no more. He shall depart in peace, and, with his expiring breath, address his Lord, *Into thine hand I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.*

Thus we have followed the lively Christian into his family, the busy world, the closet, the Church, and his dying chamber. The colouring of the character is taken from the Scriptures, and distinguished from that false zeal and rant which are, alas! possessed by too many; it is, therefore, not exaggerated. Many such have lived, and have passed into the regions of immortality; and, I hope, many such, in different religious denominations, are now to be found on earth. Let us then take the portrait of the lively Christian, and each one ask, “Is this my likeness? Do I feel—do I live—do I enjoy the high pleasures of christianity?” Alas! it is a possible case; though we may have sustained a public profession for

many years, and be highly esteemed by others, we are very far from being lively and animated Christians. Indeed, to be made *alive* by grace, is an inestimable mercy; but then you must not forget the same God can make you *lively*. Go then in secret, humble prayer, and ask for the desired blessing; and let this consideration encourage you, that your Saviour, enthroned in glory, saith, *My grace is sufficient for you.*

THOU art the source and centre of all minds,  
'Their only point of rest, ETERNAL WORD;  
From thee departing, they are lost, and rove  
At random, without honour, hope, or peace;  
From thee is all that soothes the life of man;  
His high endeavour, and his glad success;  
His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.  
But O! thou bounteous Giver of all good!  
Thou art of all thy gifts THYSELF the crown;  
Give what thou can'st, without THEE we are poor,  
And with THEE rich, take what thou wilt away.

W.

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## LECTURE XIII.

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### THE BEST ROBE.

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LUKE XV. 22.

*Bring forth the best Robe, and put it on him.*

This spotless robe the same appears,  
When ruin'd nature sinks in years;  
No age can change its glorious hue,  
The robe of Christ is ever new.

IN this admirable parable of the prodigal son is exhibited, in the most striking manner, the love of God to repenting transgressors. The order of the compassionate parent to produce the *best robe* to cover the nakedness of his son, is a lively description of God's abounding goodness in covering the penitent sinner with the best robe of the *righteousness of Jesus*.

For our present improvement, through the medium of this parable, let us contemplate the righteousness of Christ, under the charming emblem of a ROBE;—inquire to whom the order is given to produce it, and the truly interesting purpose for which it was designed.

1. A robe is a long outer garment, which being worn, at once defends, delights, and adorns, and is admirably expressive of that personal, universal obedience to God's law, with which, as rational creatures, we should be covered, in order to stand with acceptance at the bar of justice. Such a moral robe our first parent *Adam*, for a time, wore in Paradise; but, like the prodigal son, by disobedience, he lost his robe, and his righteousness became *as filthy rags*. Not he alone, but all his posterity were involved in equal ruin; and each individual son, from



this corrupt parent, makes himself more prodigal and vile by actual, incessant crimes. In that most depraved state, mankind must have sunk beneath eternal woe, had not the EVERLASTING FATHER provided a *new* and a *better* robe, through the obedience and death of Jesus Christ our Lord! Christ, therefore, is called *the second Adam—the Lord from heaven—the Lord our righteousness*. Thus, *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous*. I presume to call this robe an outer garment, as it is chiefly visible to the eyes of God, of Angels, and of men, denominating the justified character of him who wears it, and proving him to be *accepted in the Beloved*. Likewise, as the robe covers all within, so it is to be distinguished from that *inner* work of truth, righteousness, and sanctification, wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost; yet both the *outer* and the *inner* form the characteristic garments of a true Christian.

Let us also remember, that a robe is formed of many threads, closely woven, and thus made ready for its intended use. Jesus, therefore, according to the prophecy, was *to bring in everlasting righteousness*. He came to fulfil the law, that not a jot thereof might fail; and if I may so say, wrought every thread of the law in his own obedience, so admirably compact in every part of his private and mediatorial life, as to form a complete robe for prodigal sinners. A robe, not unaptly expressed by the garment in which the Saviour appeared to be crucified, which was *without seam, woven from the top throughout*. This robe, therefore, must be received whole and entire, without the least addition or diminution, by every returning prodigal who seeks justification and eternal life in the mansion of our everlasting Father!

In this instructive parable it is called the *best robe*. Better than that of Adam's in Paradise, and superior to Angels in glory; for theirs were the righteousness of creatures, and therefore mutable; but this is the *righteousness of God*. It is the best robe that heaven could bestow, and proved to be the best by numberless prodigals who have been covered therewith. It is a wedding robe, provided for the best of purposes; the highest degree of interest, and the most charming union! Not a perfection of *humanity*, not a communicative attribute of *divinity*, but what shine in this robe with inconceivable brilliancy! In it we can happily approach the throne of grace while on earth; and in it, thousands stand before the throne of glory in heaven!

Since this robe is so inestimably precious; how is it that any returning prodigal obtains a sight of it, and is enabled to receive it as his own? This was the next inquiry.

2. The father said unto his servants, *Bring forth the best robe*. By his servants I presume is intended the Ministers of the Gospel; who are truly *the servants of the Most High God*, for the important purpose of waiting upon returning prodigals, and *showing unto them the way of salvation*. But is it in the power of man to produce the robe, and to cover the sinner for his justification before God? Is it not God that justifieth? Most assuredly it is. So in this parable, it was the father's robe, deposited in his house, and brought forward at his command. He might have returned from the field, and brought it forth with his own hand; but it was his pleasure to use means which should issue in his own praise. Thus *it pleaseth God, by the simplicity of preaching, to save them that believe*. The servant,

therefore, like the Minister of God, obeyed his master's orders; he knew the robe, and where to lay his hand upon it: with animated heart he brought it forth, flowing in his hand, commanding the attention of all! Hence we learn, that it is the indispensable privilege of every Minister of the Gospel, experimentally to know, and to explain the ROBE OF IMMANUEL'S RIGHTEOUSNESS. He finds it ready to his hand in the wardrobe of the Scriptures; and from his own experience commends the fitness and importance of it for others. Indeed, he is never so happy on earth as when ordered by his Lord, in season and out of season, *to preach the durable riches and righteousness of Jesus Christ.*

However, to return to our question, Whether it be in the power of a returning prodigal to put on this prepared robe for his comfort and honour? I shall just say, that God bestows his most blessed Spirit, by which faith, like the hand, takes the robe, and enjoys the benefit of it. Therefore Paul said, *We are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. We are justified by faith.* So that in the *application*, as well as the *preparation* of the robe of righteousness, every returning prodigal is indebted to the Lord.

3. The interesting purpose for which the best robe was produced, demands our next inquiry. It is with pleasure that we answer, not to aggravate the wretchedness of the prodigal, by being held in contrast with his defiled garb; but to cover his misery, to adorn his person, and to introduce him to his father's house. It was, therefore, put upon him; it became his by the free gift of his forgiving father; and he could not but know it. So, *the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ, is unto all, and upon all them that believe.* And

we are exhorted to *put on* (as a robe) *the Lord Jesus Christ*.

How great the change in this accepted prodigal! No more spending his time and substance in the paths of dissipation, but happy in his father's arms! Cold and hunger, storm and tempest, shame and rags, are his companions no more! In the best robe he is secure from all; his sonship is recognized and becomes visible; and possesses an indisputable right to his father's house. Such are the inestimable attendants on an investiture with a Saviour's robe! In a change so great, and in blessedness so valuable, what heart but must rejoice, what Angel but must admire!

Let us not forget to mark the tender feelings of the restored prodigal's heart. How dear, how divinely precious must be his compassionate father! What emotions of grateful joy arise within his soul! What admiration of this new, and invaluable robe, provided without his knowledge, and freely bestowed, without the shadow of merit! I know not, if he be most melted into contrition, or elated with pardoning love! Let Isaiah aid our pen to express the feelings of the accepted prodigal. *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.*

If a merciful and gracious transaction of this kind on earth demand so much admiration and praise, how truly grand, and how inconceivably glorious will that scene be when *the dead in Christ shall rise first*, and put on *their garments of immortality*, and be admitted to their Father's mansion in glory!

O that as prodigals by nature and by practice, we may arise from every sordid passion, and with deep contrition go unto our offended Father; give no rest unto our souls until we feel ourselves within his paternal embrace, and covered with the best robe of Immanuel's righteousness! If thus *found in him, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*, then we need not fear the shafts of death, nor dread the solemn scenes of final judgment. Each may with confidence exclaim,

Bold shall I stand in that great day,  
For who ought to my charge shall lay,  
While through thy blood absolv'd I am  
From sin's tremendous curse and shame!



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## LECTURE XIV.

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### THE RING.

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LUKE XV. 22.

—*Put a ring on his hand.*

As emblematic of my Father's love,  
Whose power constraining brought me to his feet  
A wretched wanderer—see, the ring appears,  
Sure pledge of union and of grace divine:  
Let then this ring, with sacred gifts replete,  
Remove my sorrows and my ceaseless tears,  
Around my soul my Father's smiles entwine,  
And safe conduct me to his blest abodes above.

AS on our last Sabbath we employed our meditations on *the best robe*, which the father prepared and bestowed upon the repenting prodigal, perhaps it may not be unacceptable now to offer some remarks on that other singular expression of parental love, in placing a ring upon his hand. By the investiture of a robe, we saw a representation of the personal justification of a sinner in the **RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST**; so, the gift of a **RING** must be equally replete with a moral instruction to us.

1. It was for **ORNAMENT**. Probably, the prodigal, when in the vanity of his youth, and at the time when his hands, covered with rings and bracelets, grasped his divided patrimony, was ornamented with precious jewels, sparkling in his eye. But those, with all his other substance, were expended in riotous living; his hands made bare, and swollen, by submitting to the most arduous and debasing employ. From this drudgery he is now released, and those hands, defiled as they were, are lifted up and employed in earnest prayer for pardon.

The pardon is conferred, and the hand ornamented with a jewel, corresponding with that lovely *robe* in which he was to be introduced to his father's house. No small expression this of God's vouchsafement of the graces of his Holy Spirit, which adorn every accepted prodigal; and who, in the language of Ezekiel, is *made perfectly beautiful, through the comeliness that God putteth upon him.*

2. It was a pledge of UNION, by which the prodigal became more sensibly assured of his father's forgiveness and acceptance. How charmingly expressive is this of God's gracious conduct to a repenting sinner? First he is covered with the robe of Immanuel's righteousness; then receives the pledge of heavenly union. Thus, *being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* How striking is the emblem! What more expressive of God's eternal love and union than a ring, which hath neither beginning nor end? The ring, not only presented, but actually put upon his hand, thereby leaving him no room for doubt nor hesitation concerning the reality of his reconciliation, and his union to his father. Chrysostom says, "The ring was put upon the prodigal, as an emblem of his soul's espousals to Christ." Be it so: this valuable pledge he must now believe to be his own; it became his by parental gift, and, I presume, whenever he cast his eye upon the ring, at once it reminded him of his former prodigality, and that grateful affection which is most justly due to his parent. Such is the nature of true religion! *We love God because he first loved us.* Nothing will dissolve the hard heart; nothing melt down the sinner's soul in deep contrition, and raise it up again to God in holy admiration and heavenly delight, but a sense of everlasting for-

giving love ! O may this love be our happy portion from day to day ! May it constrain us to every duty our heavenly Parent enjoins ; and so effectually unite our heart to God, that we may play the part of a disobedient prodigal no more !

3. One ancient use of the ring was to SEAL OBLIGATIONS AND TO CONFIRM DECREES. Thus the royal edict of Ahasuerus, which was obtained through the wicked intrigue of Haman, for the murder of the Jews, was sealed by the secretary with *the king's ring*. Nor is it improbable, that by the father's placing the ring upon the hand of his prodigal son, that he thereby received him into his family, to perform such duties, and to execute such commands, as might be connected with his future wealth and affluence. However, of this we are certain, every prodigal sinner, restored by grace to the embraces of his heavenly Father, is possessed of that appropriating faith which is more precious than gold that perisheth, and enables him, with David, to have respect to *all the testimonies of God*, and to confirm, with hand and heart, all the purposes, decrees, threatenings, and promises of his Father, revealed in Christ by the Gospel. *He that hath received this testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true.*

Equally striking does the gift of a ring express the witness and THE SEALING OF THE HOLY GHOST upon the penitent's own heart. By this spiritual sealing, the image of Jesus Christ is formed upon the soul, and becomes visible in life ; the conscience enjoys the testimony of peace, and is secured in hope of everlasting bliss. So the Ephesians, *after that they believed*, like the prodigal's restoration and investiture with the justifying robe, *they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of*

*promise, unto the day of redemption; therefore, there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Thus, accepted in the Beloved, and their conscience sealed with pardoning love, what can destroy their hope? Who shall rob them of their title to their Father's blessed habitation?*

4. The gift of a ring was an ancient token of the highest HONOUR AND EXALTATION. Such a mark of distinction Pharaoh conferred upon Joseph, when he made him Vice-Roy over all the land of Egypt. *And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand.* By this Joseph at once enjoyed his freedom from the dungeon, was invested with authority, and was publicly received in the Court of Pharaoh, and in all the land, as elevated to the height of grandeur, being the second upon the throne of Egypt. We therefore believe that no greater token of honour and exaltation could the father bestow upon his safe-restored, prodigal son, than by ordering his servant to place a ring upon his hand. Yet, what are all these, with ten thousand other tokens of distinction, when compared with that honour which cometh from God, and is connected with the salvation of an immortal soul? *In thy name, O most blessed Saviour, shall thy people rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted!* The repenting, prodigal sinner, restored, finds himself exalted from a state of wretchedness to the high honours of a child of God; to take possession of Christ as his portion, with all the treasures of his grace; to improve all the blessings of providence for his best interest, enter into his father's habitation below, and enjoy its privileges, in certain expectation that when time with him shall be

no more, he shall be exalted to a throne of glory in the mansions of blessedness above! *Such honour have all his saints. Praise ye the Lord.*

With pleasure we may now congratulate the prodigal on his happy restoration, and allow him to enjoy the felicity of so great a change! And, O that it may be our happiness, equally to review the grace of Christ in our personal conversion to God! What humility and self-abhorrence must pervade the prodigal's heart while reflecting upon his past disobedience; his abused moments; his profligate life; and his forgetfulness of his tender parent! How deep, how unexpected that conviction which penetrated his heart, when, by the providence of God, a famine was created in the land, and first dictated his return to his father's arms! But, what lips can sufficiently describe the sensibility of his soul, when he beheld his father approaching, and felt himself encircled within his tender embraces! How great his astonishment, on hearing the parental orders, *Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring upon his hand!* These, so far from being the fruit of his merit, were completely prepared without his knowledge, and freely bestowed upon him without his request. From what source could these favours flow but a parent's compassionate heart? And what more calculated to produce future obedience, gratitude, affection, and an infinite train of other excellent qualities, as worthy the man as it was a relation to such a valuable father! In each of these instances, as in a glass, the humble Christian may see his own likeness, and be taught to exclaim,

O! to grace, how great a debtor,

Daily I'm constrain'd to be!



Let that grace now, like a fetter,  
Bind my wand'ring heart to thee !

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love—  
Here's my heart—O take and seal it !  
Seal it for thy courts above !

As a necessary conclusion to this, and the preceding LECTURE, permit me to urge each of you to collect the remarks which I have made upon the conduct of the father to the prodigal son, and apply them to yourselves; inquiring how far, and in what part, you become interested. The three principal stages of the prodigal son are sufficient, if God shines upon your understanding, to discover your real character. The prodigal, at a DISTANCE, in a strange land, spending his time, debasing his faculties by sin, and abusing the bounties of Providence, will teach you what is the state and practice of every sinner at a distance from God. Is this your case? Are you acting the prodigal's part? And can you in such a state be happy? Impossible! and, sooner or later, like them you will find it so. The prodigal, on his RETURN, describes the state of man in his repentance and conversion. The evident cause of his return was a famine created in the land; which, confessedly, is one of the special judgments of God. How many more such prodigals might have been in that land we know not; however, this person *came to himself*; saw and felt his wretched state, and knew he must perish or return to his father. Had we seen him on the road, covered with rags, without a shoe to his foot, watering the path with his tears, while his breast heaved with conscious guilt.

and shame, how could we have forborn our tenderest sympathy? Ah! my dear fellow sinners, if you have felt the evil of sin, your departure from God, and have ever returned to him, you are able to measure the steps of the prodigal in your own experience. Valuable indeed has been that affliction, or those means, under God, be they what they may, which have brought you to yourselves, and now conducts you to the Lord! Disobedient and vile as the prodigal had been, the only secret source of relief was the remembrance that he had a father; to him he would return with tears of contrition, in hope of forgiveness and acceptance. This too is your consolation, that the Parent of nature is your everlasting Father in Christ Jesus. He sees you, though yet afar off; soon and unexpected he may surround you with his embraces, for no returning prodigal was ever spurned from his presence. *Turn unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord.* The last state in the parable, is the prodigal RESTORED. Here, all that can awaken the finer sensibilities of the soul, and that can ensure a repenting transgressor of acceptance, union, and love, are exhibited in the most charming manner! If this has been your happy case, you need not my aid to describe the memorable scene. You returned in rags, and received a robe. Though you broke the divine law, and rebelled against the Author of your being, you received the ring of assurance and love, as a pledge of your pardon. Incapable of walking in the paths of obedience, like the prodigal without a sandal to his foot, you received *the shoes of the preparation of the Gospel of peace*; hungry and thirsty, finding nothing but husks in the vanities and riches of the world, you received an invitation to the house of your God, and was regaled with a banquet!

*They began to be merry.* And is that joy yet extinguished in your breast? Surely not. You began to be merry; but not like the mirth of the ungodly, that expires as a vapour; your joy shall remain, and be coeval with eternity! I said, from these three stages, each of you might learn your characters, the prodigal—at a distance, on his return, and in happy restoration.

Sincerely do I wish these lectures may be the mean of awakening the careless, encouraging the penitent, and increasing the joy of those who are accepted. Happy that family which resembles the father's house—where prodigals are happily restored, the blessings of peace enjoyed, and heavenly mirth attends them all the way to the mansions of glory above!

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## LECTURE XV.

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### ON THE TWO RESURRECTIONS.

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DAN. xii. 2.

*Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come  
To fetch thy ransom'd people home,  
Shall I among them stand?  
Shall such a worthless worm as I,  
Who sometimes am afraid to die,  
Be found at thy right hand?

THERE are a few arguments arising from natural religion, which may be sufficient to induce us to believe the probability of a resurrection from the dead. But, it is one of the peculiarities of the Bible to instruct us into the nature and certainty of so great an event. This subject is confessedly one of the most interesting and solemn that can claim our attention. In this Lecture we will, therefore, attempt to state the difference which the sacred writings inform us will take place between the resurrection of the righteous and of the wicked.

1. The first distinction is in order of TIME. *The dead in Christ shall rise first. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But, the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.* Thus, agreeable to the sentiment of David, *the upright shall have dominion over the wicked in the morning*:—Leaving the unrighteous among the congregation of the dead, until the pe-

riod of the Millennium shall be accomplished. We cannot but perceive an admirable justness in this Divine procedure, that the wicked should be excluded from that most delightful state where *Jesus shall reign before his ancient gloriously*. Such persons lived under the power of spiritual death: God was not in all their thoughts, neither did they desire the knowledge of his ways. So far from their having any pleasure in the assemblies of the righteous, they pursued such paths as were contrary to virtue and offensive to God. No wonder, therefore, we should find such solemn orders from heaven, that such should remain under the powers of death and the grave, while the followers of Jesus partake of a *thousand years* pleasure in the new Jerusalem, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and where the risen throng of the redeemed shall sing *Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*. May we not then say, *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection? on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ*. Nevertheless, at the expiration of the thousand years the wicked shall be raised and come forth to judgment.

2. We shall next show the MANNER how the two resurrections shall be accomplished. Both shall be performed by Christ; yet, by his power exercised upon two very different principles, and with equally different designs.

The resurrection of the righteous will be performed by Christ as their Lord and Redeemer, under the administration of his *grace*. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Such were not under the *law*, but under *grace*; united to Jesus, they loved and served him: when flesh and heart failed, the Lord was the strength of their



heart and their portion for ever. In the prospect of death they could say, with Job, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.* Now arrives the blissful morning; *the sun of righteousness* arises with such healing in his beams, that the dust of his saints which hath lain for ages in the grave shall arise. It is the voice of Jesus! It speaks, *Arise, my fair one, and come away, come from the dust of death to die no more; come to enjoy thy kindred spirits, and live and reign with me; come to my arms, and be for ever blessed!*

O solemn reverse! The resurrection of the wicked shall be raised by the same Christ, yet under the administration of *justice*, as JUDGE of all. The wicked go down to the grave with the sins of their youth; they die in their blood, and death receiveth them as prisoners of justice, in charge, bound over to the judgment of the great day, to receive the tremendous execution; for, *as many as are under the law, are under its curse.* Solemn state! truly affecting, even in anticipation! How awful then must be the scene! The millions of the wicked dead awoke from their state by the sound of the last trump, brought forth from their graves as malefactors from their cells, laden with the ponderous fetters of their iniquities, to stand before the Lord and receive the final doom!

What heart but must sensibly feel on contemplation of this difference between the two resurrections! Some to be raised by the thunders of vindictive justice from the hand of Jesus, ordained Judge of all; others awoke from their gentle sleep of death as by the voice of Jesus, the

sweet bridegroom of his Church, to receive his bride to his bosom for evermore !

3. *Some men will say, How are the dead raised up, and with what bodies do they come?* This important question, introduced by Paul, will assist us to observe another material difference between the resurrection of the righteous and of the wicked. This relates to their **BODIES**; the one raised in *honour*, the other in *dishonour*.

The Apostle, on the resurrection of the righteous, in this chapter (for I presume he speaks of no other), most justly and eloquently declares of the body, *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.* The same writer, in his Epistle to the Philippians, ascribing the resurrection to the power of Jesus, saith, *who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.* Our blessed Saviour, in his answer to the Sadducees, taught this most charming lesson, *that in the resurrection they would neither marry, nor be given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the Angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.* That is, I presume, in the resurrection the saints of God, like the holy Angels, shall be free from desires and appetites incident to humanity in its present state; chastity and spirituality shall be in the highest degree perfect, and evince that the children of the resurrection are indeed the children of God.

From these observations upon the words of Christ and his apostle, what a charming view may we take of the glory of the resurrection of the bodies of the righteous ! They shall be like Christ's glorious body, in which he arose from the dead, conversed with his disciples forty days, ascended to heaven with a cloud of Angels, and is now set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, as a certain pledge of the resurrection of all his saints. It cannot be otherwise ; such is the union between Christ and his Church ; he is flesh of their flesh, and bone of their bone ; he is their head, and will never suffer the members of his body to remain in oblivion ! The morning shall arrive when the ancient promise shall be accomplished : *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust : for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.* Then lift your heads, ye righteous, for your redemption draweth nigh !

Ah ! how different the raised bodies of the finally impenitent and unbelieving ! Here the dictate of kindred clay, and compassion to fellow men, would call for softness of expression ; but truth is solemn, and must be heard. The bodies of the wicked must rise in *corruption*. *That which is of the flesh, is flesh still. He that soweth to the flesh, must of the flesh reap corruption. That which is unholy and filthy, let it be unholy and filthy still.* Such unhappy persons lived under the curse ; they died under the curse ; and under the curse they must arise from the grave. As all the diseases, and pains, and corruptions of body are the effect of sin, and a part of the curse denounced against sinners, and that curse never having been removed from them ; of

course the body cannot possibly leave its evils behind it in the grave, but must arise with them, while its attached corruptions form a material part of its future misery! These are the persons who, according to our text, even as to their polluted bodies, *arise to shame and everlasting contempt*. A prospect of this, one would think, were not men lost to all conviction of futurity, would convince the thoughtless sinner of the necessity of flying to the arms of Jesus for pardon and for life. But,

4. The different state of the bodies of the righteous and of the wicked, at the first and the second resurrection, however serious to contemplate, is but as a shadow when compared with the state of their SOULS. On this let us indulge some short reflections.

The souls of the godly, when *absent from the body*, are said to be *present with the Lord*. No word can be found to express the swift transition; swifter than an eagle cutteth the air, or the eye-lid performs its motion. From our Lord's address to the penitent thief upon the cross, we are taught to believe that the soul, immediately on its dismissal, is with Jesus in Paradise. And from the last state of the pious beggar who lay at the rich man's gate, we learn that his soul was carried by Angels into Abraham's bosom. Both which design a state of repose and blessedness; the soul grasping as much of the vision and the presence of God as its disembodied state can admit. Still its happiness is incomplete. As body and soul were formed for each other, both purchased by the blood of Jesus, and both made the temple of the Holy Ghost in time, there must of necessity be a re-union in order to Christ's full possession of them, and of their being glorified in eternity. This re-union is to take place on the morning of the resurrection. Like as in the vision



of Ezekiel, the body will be raised in perfection; then the breath, the life, the soul, will enter. From the bosom of the Father the soul will wing its way to claim its native risen body; both conformed to the bright image of Jesus, and by him presented to the Father as his bride, with exceeding great glory. How inconceivably grand must that presentation be!

How vast a contrast the resurrection of the wicked! Their spirits are brought forward from their separate state of misery, to claim their vile bodies, in order for final judgment. *The rich man died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments.* And it is declared, at the second resurrection, *death and hell shall give up the dead which are in them.* Justice requires this union of body and soul, in order for judgment, as both had been companions, and agents to each other, in transgression. But who can describe the pangs of spirit on the sight and claim of that body it once inhabited, the members and powers of which were made instruments of unrighteousness, and must now be repossessed in misery, to part no more? These views, founded upon the unerring testimony of Scripture, cannot fail to make the deepest and most solemn impression upon every conscious mind. However, with the Bible in our hand, we are unavoidably led to take one step farther into the solemn scenes of futurity; and,

5. Learn the final issue both of good and bad, as consequent upon their resurrection. This will take place in the order, and with the same solemn scenes which our Lord himself hath described in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. From the assembled world the Lord will separate the righteous from the wicked; the one to be placed on his right hand, the other on the left. The



words of our text will be verified; *everlasting life* will be the portion of some; *shame and everlasting contempt* will be the covering of others. This is the hour predicted by our Lord Jesus, when *all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.* Eternal life or death closes the scene! What pen is able to describe the felicity of the one, or the misery of the other? Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? May we not then exclaim, *Just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints! Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; who shall not fear before thee?*

For a few moments let us review the whole subject, collecting the difference between the two resurrections. The righteous shall arise a thousand years before the ungodly. Jesus, as the bridegroom shall awake his bride from the slumber of death to enjoy his embraces; but he shall raise the wicked by the hand of justice, to stand in judgment. The bodies of the saints shall be raised in honour and glory; the disobedient shall come forth in corruption. The souls of the redeemed shall come forth from the blissful mansions of the Father, to receive their glorified bodies to greater felicity; the souls of the wicked come forth from the recess of darkness to enter their vile bodies, for completeness in sorrow. The final issue of the redeemed is a crown of life, the unbelieving to endure the second death. Solemn subject!

Let us then, in sincerity, ask ourselves under which of these resurrections we shall appear? What hope resides in our breast, that Jesus hath redeemed us to God by his blood, and will raise us up from death to

honour and glory? As we are in life, so we shall be in death; as we appear at the throne of grace, so shall we stand in the last day. Never let us rest until we are satisfied of our hope in Christ, and of an interest in the Father's love! It is our life, it is our all!

Let the subject of the first resurrection reconcile us to death, and aid our souls to wait for the coming of our Lord. How charming the view which it affords us of the wisdom, the power, and the glory of the Redeemer! Christian, remember that the blessed Saviour who glorified his grace in separating you from the practice of iniquity and the company of the ungodly, will glorify his wisdom and power in separating your dust in the grave from the corruption of the wicked, and bring you forth to shine as the stars in his kingdom! If this truth alone was received with due weight upon the heart, what an astonishing influence would it have upon our whole life and conversation! Under such impressions let each of us sincerely resolve with Job, *All the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change come.*

O may I pant for God in each desire,  
And with strong faith increase the holy fire!  
Stretch out my soul in hope, and grasp the prize  
Which in ETERNITY'S deep bosom lies!  
At the GREAT DAY of recompense behold,  
Devoid of fear, the sacred book unfold;  
Then wafted upwards to the blissful seat,  
From age to age my grateful song repeat;  
My light, my life, my God, my Saviour see,  
And rival Angels in the praise of THEE.

YOUNG.

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## LECTURE XVI.

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### HUMILITY.

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1 PETER V. 5.

*Be clothed with Humility.*

Come, sweet humility, celestial grace!  
And let me feel thy gentle reign within;  
Thou well becom'st a wretched fallen race,  
Whose lives are forfeited by sin.

R. A.

PRIDE entailed ruin on the fallen angels; and the same vile temper prompted our first parents to desire *to be as gods, knowing good and evil*. Thus, from the earliest period of time, the fountain of pride was open, and like an overflowing stream, has found its way into all orders and degrees of mankind. Astonishing indeed! that God should expel those rebellious spirits from heaven, and consign them to regions of darkness, and yet determine to stain the pride of man, in a way that should save the soul, clothe it with humility, and prepare it to dwell in his blissful presence for ever! That all who now hear me are by nature born into the world with this principle of pride, is too evident to admit of contradiction. In the heart, temper, and life, it shows itself against God and man in numberless forms. The habits of education may either curb or cultivate this passion; but it is God alone who can kill it in its root, and clothe us with humility. I purpose, therefore, in this Lecture, to explain to you how God is pleased to perform this interesting work, and then enforce the exhortation of Peter—*Be clothed with humility*.

1. HUMILITY is formed in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. As a new life is communicated, so a new man is formed, in direct opposition to the old; and humility is a very distinguishing part of that new creature. Peter, who well understood this subject, asserts humility, or, which is equally the same, *a meek and quiet spirit, to be the ornament of the hidden man of the heart; and is in the sight of God of great price.* This gracious principle, habit, or virtue, *humility*, is real; seated in the heart, and distinguished from that species of temper which Paul calls *voluntary humility*, and connected with *will-worship*. This humility, produced in the heart by the Holy Ghost, is founded in true knowledge, and is inseparably connected with faith, hope, joy, peace, love, and every grace which adorns the Christian. It makes an astonishing alteration in the views, temper, and conduct of its possessor; and leaves him no room to doubt or hesitate, that it has given a mortal stab to his carnal pride, and that God alone can be its author. It is of pure, efficacious grace, and lays the sinner in the dust of self-abasement, and exalts the Lord in the richness and glory of salvation. Having said that Gospel humility was founded in knowledge, I will attempt to show you how the Spirit of God *expands*, if I may so say, this principle, by progressive discoveries of the most solemn and interesting subjects revealed in the Bible, and which are familiar with every man born of God.

THE MORAL LAW. In this the holiness and justice of Jehovah is revealed, and binds the creature to perfect, personal, and perpetual obedience. It takes cognizance of the desires, thoughts, and actions of the man. By this law, says Paul, *is the knowledge of sin.* The person under the teachings of the Spirit, has his eyes open to



behold the majesty of his Maker in this law, and his conscience trembles on a conviction of his transgressions and his guilt. A trial now takes place before the bar of God; the law makes its demands, and, however proud nature may attempt to muster every plea in favour of merit, the sinner eventually exclaims with David, *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight no flesh living shall be justified.* Thus the sinner is humbled. He honours God in the requisitions of his law. The pride of human merit is dashed in pieces; and he is willing to be saved entirely in God's own way. The whole of this humbling conviction is altogether the work of that blessed Spirit of truth, promised *to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.*

**THE SUFFERINGS AND DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST.** This is a subject at which humility bows with inexpressible solemnity. The dignity of the **ADORED PERSON**, the greatness of his sufferings, the dreadfulness of his death: that all this was for sinners; to satisfy justice, to procure pardon, righteousness, and peace for the vilest of the vile! Here the sinner bows at the cross, and adores the grace! But, when the Spirit fulfils his office, and takes of these great blessings from a crucified Christ, and shows them in application to the heart for personal pardon, acceptance, and peace, the most profound humility is produced, and the sinner cries, *Why me, Lord? Why me? O! to grace how great a debtor!* Thus is fulfilled the prediction of Isaiah; *The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.*

**THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS.** This affords farther excitement to humility. *Learn of me,* said Jesus, *for I am*



*meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for whosoever receiveth not the kingdom of heaven as a little child, shall not enter therein.* The life of Christ was the perfection of humility. In his walk before his Father, and in his converse with men, meekness and humility shone with inexpressible excellence. What an example of humility did Jesus set when he washed his disciples' feet? and what an affecting scene of Christ's humility was exhibited in the garden of Gethsamene? Still more if we ascend the hill of Calvary. This scene is called *his humiliation*. He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross! Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high; who not only humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth; but who hath assumed our nature, and died for our crimes, to raise up the poor from distress, and to crown them with glory! Who then on a visit to Calvary can indulge the least flame of pride? Who but must be clothed with humility; and through the virtues of the cross, ardently desire to walk humbly with God?

**THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION.** This is designed to produce humility of mind. Pride feeds upon the lusts of the flesh and the carnal pleasures of life. The children of God, as such, are called from these to enjoy holy pleasures from more noble objects. Passing through the world, the furnace of affliction becomes as necessary to prove them and to humble them, as it was to the Israelites in their passage through the wilderness. Afflictions in themselves have a natural tendency to irritate and to harden the heart of man. By nature, at best, we have but a Pharaoh's heart; the more afflicted, the more proud

and rebellious. Under all the trials of the righteous, the Spirit of God, as *a spirit of burning*, superintends the furnace, purges away the dross, and produces subjection and humility. Thus Job was persuaded, when God had tried him, *he should come forth as gold. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.*

After thus naming the law, the sufferings of Christ, the life of Christ, and the furnace of affliction, as the several means through which the Spirit of God produces humility, it is of importance for us to inquire, if thereby we have been humbled before the Lord? It is a solemn consideration; we must, as sinners, be humbled at the *throne of grace*, or, eventually, before the *throne of judgment*. If you have by grace, been humbled at the feet of Jesus, to you the exhortation of Peter will be highly acceptable. To enforce which, I shall now proceed,

2. *Be clothed with humility.* This virtue Peter compares to a garment. Not, I presume, that justifying robe of the obedience of Jesus, which 'is unto all, and upon all them that believe, for their justification before God; but an inner robe, which is a material part of our personal sanctification by the Spirit. It is called a clothing, because it is the apparel of the whole new man, extending to all our faculties, and to all our actions; and as it is to be worn as our daily covering, whenever we appear before God, enter into his Church, or discharge the moral duties of our family.

To enforce the exhortation, let me remind you, that humility best becomes you both as sinners in yourselves, and as saints in Christ Jesus. It will qualify you for greater usefulness in life, and never fail to give you additional lustre in every duty you are called to perform in

your family. This robe will preserve you amidst the thorns and briars in your paths, and help you to ward off many a blow from the malicious arm of calumny. In it you may have greater boldness to approach before God, for, *He forgetteth not the cry of the humble*. It will fail not to keep you in a dependent state upon God, and lead you to the fountain of grace for more peace, joy, and felicity; for, *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble*. And you will, most assuredly, enjoy more sensibly the presence of God upon your souls; for *thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the contrite ones*.

The younger part of this family will permit me to recommend to them this charming robe of humility. Pride, especially in youth, is the forerunner of numberless evils, and never fails to gain the most condign contempt from the virtuous. Humility is usually accompanied by other amiable graces, and sets them off with double brilliance; gains the esteem of all around, and qualifies you for entering the busy scenes of public life with advantage: And what is still more valuable, if you are clothed with Gospel humility, and follow the meek and holy Jesus in his amiable example, you must certainly be pronounced unspeakably happy.

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## LECTURE XVII.

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### *CHRIST AN HIGH PRIEST.*

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HEB. iii. 1.

*Consider the High Priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus.*

Jesus our great High Priest  
Has full atonement made;  
Ye weary spirits rest,  
Ye mourning souls be glad!  
The year of jubilee is come;  
Return, ye ransom'd sinners, home.

A. M. T.

THE names, characters, and offices of the Son of God are chiefly taken from the relative connections of mankind; our familiarity with which, aid our contemplations to enjoy Jesus as our own. It is confessed there is no intimation in natural religion; neither is there any personal or relative character among men, which affords the least idea that God will, or consistently can, pardon and cleanse a sinner for the purpose of dwelling with him in glory. For this very reason, God instituted the office of High Priest among the Hebrews, to offer an atonement, and make intercession for the people, thereby pointing out the person and office of the promised Messiah; and which are most eminently realized in Jesus Christ, the true Aaron, the great High Priest of our profession; in whose blood we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, and an hope of eternal life. As the High Priest under the law was the glory of Israel, so Jesus, the great High Priest in the Gospel, is the glory of the Church of God! Let us therefore listen to the injunction of our text, and *consider* Jesus Christ in his priestly



office, beseeching God to establish our faith, and enable us to bear the fruit of righteousness to the glory of his grace! Permit me to premise, that as the ancient Scriptures are extremely lengthy upon this subject, I shall concentrate them as accurately as possible; not only to preserve our discourse within the usual limits, but to afford you a comprehensive view of Jesus our adored High Priest.

1. We will begin with THE PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF JESUS THE HIGH PRIEST. A call from God was absolutely necessary; for, we are assured, *no man taketh this honour unto himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*. Aaron was immediately called of God by Moses; and successive priests were admitted to office by genealogy. No one who knows the Scriptures will hesitate a moment in applying these to Christ, who is emphatically styled the *elect*, the *chosen*, the *sent* of God; and whose genealogy by *Mary* and *Joseph* is attested by Matthew and by Luke. Although the Jewish High Priest was taken from amongst his brethren, yet he was to possess a perfection of *natural bodily parts*, as specified in Lev. xxi. 16. a failure in which, even in the minutest article, was a just exclusion from office. The reason for which evidently appears; for *such an High Priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*. Now observe, as all mankind have sinned, and no perfect moral character existed to represent the holy nature required in the great High Priest, God displayed his wisdom in demanding a perfection of *natural bodily parts*, that they might be as a shadow or emblem of the still more pure, sound, holy state, both of *body* and *soul*, to be possessed by that blessed Messiah and Priest who was to come. If, there-



fore, with admiration, we contemplate the *natural* perfections of the Hebrew Priest, with what greater pleasure may we behold the *natural, moral, and spiritual* excellence of Jesus our holy Priest, who is both in body and soul the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely!—The person chosen to the Priesthood, was presented before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and most solemnly *consecrated*; the parts of which are minutely recorded. His body was first washed with water taken out of the laver which stood between the door and the altar, to denote the moral purity required in approaching Jehovah, and to signify that no man is thus pure without washing. Nor was Jesus deficient in this instance, but by the new rite of baptism publicly devoted himself to his Father, and his priestly work. Moses then took the garments, made at the express order of the Lord, which were for glory and for beauty, and put them upon Aaron. *The broidered coat of fine linen* was put on first, and next to the skin; an emblem of the personal righteousness of Jesus, compared to *fine linen*; then *the linen robe of the ephod*, which was of blue, without seam, and had pomegranates and golden bells at the hem of it; which was equally expressive of the *mediatorial righteousness of Christ*; on which the golden bells, the ministry of the Gospel, with all his people, depend; precious indeed as the pomegranate. This robe being of blue, like the firmament, well denoted the righteousness of Jesus, as *the righteousness of God*, which came down from heaven; the best robe which heaven could produce, and the best for us to receive! Then the *ephod*, the outermost garment, was put upon Aaron; this reached down near to his knees, and was of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and of fine-twined

linen, with curious workmanship, and must certainly have been very superb. It was a symbol of that glorious nature in which Immanuel appeared as our High Priest, richly adorned with the graces of the Spirit, accompanied with his bloody sufferings for his people. This ephod was girt around the body with a *girdle of gold*, wrought upon the same materials as the ephod. With such a golden girdle is Jesus represented in his magnificent appearance to John in the Isle of Patmos; for *righteousness was the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins*. Upon the shoulders of the *ephod* were placed two precious stones, on which were engraven the names of the children of Israel, and on the front was hung *the breast-plate of judgment*. In this breast-plate were placed twelve precious stones, on which were engraven the twelve Hebrew tribes; in the centre of which, was *the Urim and Thummim*. These were to be worn by the Priest as a memorial before the Lord; not that God could forget his people, or mistake his designs, but to represent our adored High Priest, the Son of God, who bears the names of his spiritual Israel upon the shoulders of his power, and upon the breast of his love, maintaining their most important interest in the highest heavens. A *mitre* of fine linen was set upon the head of Aaron; upon it was placed a plate of pure gold, on which was engraven HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD. This sometimes was called an *holy crown*, no doubt intending to characterize the purity, authority, and dignity of Christ, who is the perfection of holiness; that all his priestly work should magnify the holiness of Jehovah, and that he should be the head and fountain of sanctification to his people; for, *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*.

As I have now mentioned the chief garments, ordered by the God of Israel for their High Priest, I wish to make this remark :—In themselves, and for their High Priest alone, the order of such vestments could never have been worthy the attention of the great God ; but they were as so many emblems to point out that promised High Priest, who was *to set upon his throne*, and appear to take away sin. These emblems, therefore, exhibited to the senses of the Hebrews, were admirably calculated to aid the faith of their souls in looking forward to Messiah as a Priest ; and which we confidently believe are charmingly realized even to us, when we consider Jesus Christ the great High Priest of our profession.

Aaron, thus clothed with his sacerdotal robes, next followed his *consecration* to office, by pouring the *holy oil* upon his head. This oil was made of myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, cassia, and oil-olive, boiled or distilled. It was death to an Hebrew to counterfeit it, or apply it to any other use without a warrant from the Lord. On Aaron's head Moses poured of this oil, by which he was set apart to be the Priest of Israel. With the Bible in our hand, we are informed that the High Priest of our profession was *anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*. The holy Spirit, the divine unction, was upon Jesus without measure ; and under this anointing he performed all the parts of his priestly office. In a particular manner the Spirit of God descended upon Jesus at his baptism, when in a more public manner he was set apart, and commenced the duties of his office for the redemption of sinners.—One other part in the ceremony of *consecration* must not be unnoticed. A bullock and two rams were slain, while the hand of Aaron was placed upon the head of the animals, confessing his sins, thereby signifying that

he, though a Priest, as a sinner, deserved to die. At the same time the duty of his office taught him that a substitute was appointed to suffer in his stead ; which, no doubt, he was assisted to offer up in faith of that sacrifice which Messiah should make by the shedding of his own blood. St. Paul comments upon this part of the Hebrew ceremony of consecration, and shows the difference between Jesus and Aaron. *Who, saith he, needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people ; for this he did once, when he offered up himself.*

2. Having been more minute than I intended, in describing the person, apparel and consecration of the High Priest, I shall be more brief in enumerating the duties which God hath enjoined upon him to discharge. The most important duty was to make an *atonement* by blood for the sins of his people ; he was to go into the *holy of holies*, before the presence of the Lord, with sweet incense, to intercede, to represent in his own person all the tribes of Israel, and, according to the divine order, return and bless the people. No one who is acquainted with the Gospel, and has attentively read the Epistle to the Hebrews, on hearing those ancient duties assigned to Aaron, but what will immediately consider Jesus our adored Priest. He, indeed, hath made an ample atonement by the shedding of his own blood ; he hath arisen from the dead, and entered into heaven itself, there to represent our persons, and perpetually to intercede, and to confer the most necessary, glorious blessings upon sinful men. The Jewish High Priest was to have compassion on the ignorant, and on those who are out of the way. He was to cure the leper, with the blood of atonement, and to consecrate all subordinate priests. In all.



these we consider Jesus. How great his compassion to sinners! how efficacious in cleansing the leprosy of sin! With what heavenly truth he illuminates the understanding! and how visible are the expressions of his grace in appointing pastors and teachers for the edification and increase of his Church! We may conclude by observing, if Aaron was the glory of the Hebrew Church, and the sacred mean by which God maintained his communion with his ancient people, infinitely more so Jesus is *the brightness of his Father's glory*, the glory of the Gospel Church, and the grand mean by whom alone we have access to God, and rejoice in hope of endless bliss! Whether, therefore, we contemplate *Aaron*, *Melchizedek*, or other person denominated the Priest of God, they are equally designed, and admirably calculated to lead us to Jesus, the great High Priest, upon his throne in the realms of glory in heaven.

Let us now return to ourselves, and make the necessary inquiry, What interest we have in Jesus the ever blessed High Priest? Fallen men are prone to confide in their supposed merit, in order to enter into the presence of God; of course do not consider Jesus Christ. Indeed, if Israel had not sinned, they would have required no Priest; and if we had not transgressed, we should have no need of Jesus as a Priest to atone for us. It is our mercy, *Christ is able to save to the utmost all who come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* What then is your state of mind and exercise of heart? To depend upon that law for salvation whose precepts you have so incessantly transgressed, is to lay down beneath its awful curse. *The wages of sin is death.* You must, therefore, stand indebted to the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus, or await the



judgment of the great day. But, should it be otherwise with you, your reason, your conscience, your Bible, and, above all, the Spirit of God, should have told you your absolute need of Jesus: then give me leave to congratulate you on such an attainment.

Let me exhort you daily to consider our great High Priest, in all the duties, the exercises, and the trials of your life. Go to him for instruction. He must not only sprinkle your conscience with his blood to keep you in daily peace, but he must bear the iniquity which is unavoidably attached to your most holy performances. Fail not to consider what great and precious things Jesus hath already done for you, and testify your gratitude and love in your temper and obedience in every part of your life. Trust his future care; he will not forsake the work of his own hand; draw near to the throne of his grace for supply in every time of need. Remember our High Priest hath rent the vail, and the way to the throne both of grace and of glory is open. How grand the sight to ancient Israel when their Priest entered into the holy of holies! infinitely more glorious our High Priest in his ascension to heaven! Thither direct your eyes; contemplate your Priest by faith; and in a little while you shall be with him on his throne, and resound his praise for evermore!

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## LECTURE XVIII.

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### *THE TRIAL OF THE HEART.*

1 JOHN iii. 18—21.

*My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.*

Hail, sacred truth, thou source of peace,  
Replete with joys divine;  
Thy wonders still in me increase,  
Make all thy treasures mine.

Come then, and make thy fix'd abode  
In spirit, body, soul;  
Unveil in me the will of God,  
And all that's false controul.

T. E.

PERHAPS fewer sensations are more painful in the human breast, than to hang in doubt,—whether in futurity, everlasting felicity, or eternal pain await us! Had man been left to form a criterion on this subject for himself, he could not have arrived at the desirable point. But, the word of our God is given as a true light unto our feet, and an unerring lamp unto our path, that thereby we may attain the most happy satisfaction. Among the innumerable passages calculated to produce this blessedness, our text is not the least valuable. I purpose, therefore, to select the evidences which it con-

tains, and illucidate the conclusions which it draws in reference to our state. May we feel ourselves most solemnly exercised on the inquiry, and be able, in the issue, to exclaim, *Behold! God is my salvation, I will trust, and not be afraid.* This text contains two standards for trial, which we shall first explain, and then make personal use of them.

1. The first standard is TRUTH. *We know,* said John, *that we are of the truth.* Once they were on the side of error and delusion, but now their state is changed, and are certain that they are of the truth. While this term expresses every thing opposed to falsehood, in principle and in practice, it hath in the Gospel an extensive signification. It presents an object to our FAITH. Jesus Christ is *the true God, and eternal life.* He is *the way, the truth, and the life, and no man can come to the Father but by him.* As God, Jesus is the essential, undervived truth; as *man*, he answers the requirements of God's law, which is holy, just, and good; as *Mediator*, Jesus reveals the councils of Jehovah in the salvation of sinners. His life was a perfect obedience to the divine law, and his death an unequivocal satisfaction to justice for the sins of all his people. Righteousness and truth are the habitation of Immanuel's throne; just and true is he in all his ways. His word is true, and hath stood the scrutiny of friends and foes for many thousand years. And Jesus is the faithful and true witness, by whose testimony we must be tried in the court of our own conscience, and at the solemn bar of God. All the attributes of Deity shine in Christ as our Redeemer; he is therefore the true and only way of life to sinners, and as such, he is the desirable object of our faith.—The Spirit of God is emphatically styled *The Spirit of truth.*

He regenerates the hearts of sinners, shows them the errors of their past lives, and leads them to Jesus, the truth and the life. *Except a man be born again of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. As God requireth truth in the inward parts,* so it is by the Spirit of God alone that a pure work of grace and truth is formed in the soul. Thus rectitude is produced in the conscience; true repentance flows from the heart; while faith, desire, hope, peace, with every Christian grace, are richly communicated. Jesus promised his Spirit unto his disciples to guide them into all truth: for such is the depravity and guilt of the human mind, that without the aid of the Spirit of truth, heaven would afford them no delight. *That which is of the flesh, is flesh still.*—Truth equally respects the life of obedience, inseparably connected with the character of a child of God. *God hath chosen you through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.* The Scriptures contain the truth, as it is in Jesus. And there is an infinite variety in this truth, which furnish us with the knowledge of all that is necessary to enjoy God as our portion, render that obedience which is pleasing in his sight, regulate our own lives, and conduct us in safety through all the scenes of time.

The second standard named in our text is LOVE, which is immediately addressed to our *passions*. Although the Apostle John had an immediate respect in this text to that love which is towards the brethren, yet I cannot but conclude, from the foregoing verse, that it is immediately and inseparately connected with the love of God. *If a man hath no compassion to his brother, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* And to this very sentiment our Lord appeals. *Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.*



Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, is the first and great command of the law; and since by sin men are found lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, it hath pleased God, by an act of grace, to shed abroad his love in the hearts of his people, by the Holy Ghost, given unto them, whereby that happy principle is restored. Thus, as seed sown in good ground vegetates, and bears its own nature, the love of God is deposited in the regenerate soul, springs forth in unnumbered blades of desire, and bears that rich fruit of love to God, his law, in his providence, but, above all, in his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, that distinguish those who possess it from unbelievers. *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

Let us now reduce all the remarks I have made on the words of John to a point. Christ the truth, is an object proposed to *faith*; the Spirit of truth is revealed as the fountain of *experience*; and the word of truth as the rule of *obedience*. The love of God is the evidence of *union*; and a love to his children, the mark of *discipleship*. All these are like so many links in a chain, and are inseparable. Let us now,

2. Make use of these important subjects for the purpose of trying our hearts, and determining our state before God. I call them important, for they evidently include all that is necessary to be known and experienced, and to which the whole doctrine of the Bible is reducible; and likewise as they are fully sufficient to assure our hearts of their condition, and have confidence towards God.

It is evident, however, from the language of St. John, that this trial must be *in the heart*; and also *before God*, *who knoweth all things*. This, then, is solemn work.



O that we may feel it so ! Whether we are professors of religion or not, let us remember, our present peace and future happiness depend upon this issue. In faithfulness to our souls, let us set the truth of Christ, the operations of the Spirit of truth, the laws of the Gospel of truth, the love of God, and a love to men ; let us, I say, set these, as a glass, before our eyes, and ask the necessary questions, What we know of them ? If there be any evidences within our breasts that their salutary influence have been, and still are enjoyed ? Whether these great realities form the one thing needful to us, the love of sin be discarded, and a desire for Christ, pardon, and peace, be created ? The issue of this examination must either be *condemnation*, or *acquittal* ; there can be no alternative—no middle state. To assist in this process, let us now take the necessary parts of our text.

*If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things.* Such a verdict as this, brought into the court of conscience by the light of truth, must be attended with extreme grief. To be convinced that there is a veil upon your mind, and a thick covering upon your heart, which compel you to confess that you are an utter stranger to the knowledge and transforming influence of God's truth and love, is affecting. At the same time you may have many witnesses to the transgressions of your heart and life rushing into the soul, producing the solemn verdict, *the wages of sin is death*. Has this process ever passed in your breasts, or do you now feel its impression ? If so, still remember, though your hearts condemn you, God is greater than your hearts, and knoweth all things. We may, at best, be partial : from the state of our naturally depraved minds, we certainly forget numberless

sins of thought, of heart, and of life, committed in youth and at riper age. A deceived heart may turn us aside. But, O solemn thought ! God is greater than our hearts ; he is clothed with majesty ; a just God, and righteousness forms the habitation of his throne. He knoweth all things. Not an error of our lives, nor an evil of our hearts, but are known to him, in weight and in measure, with every circumstance attached to them. *God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.* Who can stand this trial without conviction ? What heart but must bow down before the Almighty, and acknowledge the just sentence of condemnation ? Nay, a double verdict is produced ; one from our own hearts, the other from the God that made us. But, do you ask, must we assuredly perish ? Is there no relief—no court of appeal ? Yes, if you thus pass sentence of death upon yourselves, MERCY, the swiftest winged messenger of heaven, directs your steps to the court of Calvary. There see Jesus, the sinner's Judge and Advocate, pleading his own life, his agonies, and his death, in face of law, sin, death, and hell, for you ! Fear not to enter here. The chief of sinners, self-condemned, are welcome to his blood to wash away their stains, and take the robe of his righteousness to justify them in sight of God. Hark ! in the language of Moses he calls you to his arms, *The cause that is too hard for thee, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.* Yes, that cause which you cannot plead yourself, nor aided by all the angelic host, the cause of a precious soul, to be saved or to be lost, carry it to Jesus. No sinner's cause ever miscarried in his hand ; he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. Go, go my fellow sinners, and try his power to save.

*If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence before God.* Here are mercy, grace, and love enjoyed, forming a basis on which we stand and triumph. O for clear views of an acceptance in the Beloved! The great cause is determined! *We are of the truth.* We have already embraced Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life, and here we rest; there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in him. The spirit of truth we take as our guide; we wish to hear, understand, and to keep the word of truth in our hearts, and to bring forth fruit in our lives. We have tasted of God's love, and wish to drink deeper of the sacred stream, as the only antidote for all our cares, and the only source of all our joy! As children of grace, we cannot add to our Father's glory; but we wish to love and promote the interest of all who have a name in his family. Thus *we assure our hearts before God*, that we are passed from nature to grace, from death to life, and have had that great change which none but God could perform. We confidently believe that he will also perfect our souls, carry us through storm, hear the voice of our prayer, and inspire us with praise to the glory of his grace.—Such experience brings its own evidence, and is heaven begun! Without it, what is life but dying a miserable death? May each of this family seek to have this great point determined, that you may have confidence before God in your souls, in all the afflictions of your lives, when you come to the moment of your death, and stand before him at judgment, amidst the wreck of worlds, admiring Angels, and a vast eternity!

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## LECTURE XIX.

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### THE LAW OF FAITH.

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ROM. iii. 27.

—*The law of faith.*

How long beneath the law I lay  
In bondage and distress!  
I toil'd the precepts to obey,  
But toil'd without success.

To see the law by Christ fulfill'd,  
And hear his pardoning voice,  
Changes a slave into a child,  
And duty into choice.

*Cowper.*

THE LAW OF FAITH is peculiar to the Gospel, and owns Jesus for its gracious Sovereign. It takes up sinners of mankind just where the violated law of nature leaves them, commanding them to look to Jesus for pardon and eternal life. The tenor of its precept is, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* The argument of Paul upon this law is perfectly consonant to the experience of every Christian. The moral law is established in its claims by the obedience of Jesus; the sinner is condemned in his conscience, and all boasting is excluded of personal merit; he thankfully receives and embraces the righteousness of Christ, as a free gift, in free grace, determining, henceforth, to live to the praise of his everlasting Father.

Although these few reflections may throw some degree of light on the nature of *the law of faith*, still, as it is a subject in which we cannot be too well established, we purpose to give it a closer examination; sincerely wish-

ing it may tend to consolidate our hope, and inspire our obedience in the fear of the Lord.

As it is evident that the nature and influence of *the law of faith* is placed in opposition to *the law of works*, it is necessary for us to ascertain what *faith* that is to which the Apostle gives the appellation of a law.

1. *THE GRACE OF FAITH*; or, more properly, that living, powerful principle, implanted in the soul by the Holy Ghost, who is emphatically called *the Spirit of faith*. By this new principle the mind is compelled to credit the virtue and extent of the moral law, and the rich display of the Gospel, purely on the veracity of their divine Author, and the conviction of truth they unitedly form upon the conscience. This most operative principle may be called a law, as its influence is opposed to the inbred *law of sin*. As the former is the operative law upon the heart of every subject of Christ, the latter is the infernal rule of disobedience in all the votaries of the prince of darkness. The nature, variety, extent, and force of the law of sin are too evident in the history of mankind, and more so in our own breast. The law of faith counteracts this law of sin, brings the heart into subjection to the will of God, to walk in all holiness and righteousness of life. Without sound principle there can be no sound practice, and *without faith it is impossible to please God*, or bear fruit to his praise. This is that new law which the Lord promised both to Jeremiah and Ezekiel, to write in the mind and upon the heart of his people, that they may not depart from him for ever. However, it is worthy of attention, that these two laws, the law of sin and the law of faith, are found in one and the same person, who is born of God. *I find then, saith Paul, a law, that when I would do good, evil is present*



*with me. For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man. But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.* Thanks be to God for the power of the law of faith, that sin may not have dominion over us.

2. THE WORD OF FAITH contained in the Bible, whether by promise, prophecy, or type, under the Old Testament, or in the clearer pages of the New, is undoubtedly a *law*. This law is not merely a rule of instruction; much less is it a law given by a master for the obedience of his slaves, but a law given by a parent to his son, sanctioned by the most cordial affection. The word of faith is the Gospel of the ever blessed God, our Father in Jesus and in covenant love, and intended for the obedience of the children of his grace. This law was prophesied by Isaiah ii. 3, and also xlii. 4. In Rom. viii. 2, Paul calls it *the law of the spirit of life*, which makes its subjects *free from the law of sin and death*. James terms it *the perfect law of liberty*, in opposition to the moral law, which binds the unbeliever, and holds him in bondage. The Gospel, as a *law*, possesseth every attribute that can be applied to virtuous law—SOVEREIGNTY, as it is the rule of Christ, the King of Zion, to all the subjects of his spiritual kingdom—JUSTICE, constituting the pure and holy nature of God—RIGHT, maintaining the honour of the Prince of life, and securing the privileges of his people—HAPPINESS, the result of its administration to his kingdom.

However evident it may appear that the *principle* of faith, and the *word* of faith, in the Gospel, bear the appellation, and constitute *the law of faith*, it is necessary to understand that neither the *principle* nor the *word*,

separately, would have been adequate to govern the soul of man. They must be, and actually are, *united*. That our first parent Adam had a law written upon his heart for obedience; and that an external law, the tree of knowledge, was set before him, the one corresponding with the other, as a proof of his rationality, must be obvious to all who read the history of man's creation. If this double law was necessary in the first creation, it is much more so in the second.

Man, though born again of God, not only remains a compound of matter and spirit, but, contrary to his original state, he is a subject of *sin* and of *grace*; the one existing in opposition to the other. God, therefore, has granted to his people the *internal* law of faith to operate on the conscience, and has also *revealed* his holy mind in his word as the external law and rule of obedience, both of them so harmonizing in a life of faith and love, as to make the possessor infinitely happy. To render this subject still plainer, I will add, if we had the written word as a law only, how could we have obeyed, since in us by nature there is nothing but the law of sin? If we had a principle of faith in the heart, and no written law in our hands, there would have been no object for our perceptive powers, and we should have travelled in the dark. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. Faith and the Gospel are inseparably connected, and he who takes the one without the other deceiveth himself.

As in the days of the Apostles, and in the age we live, an objection hath been brought against the law of faith, that *it maketh void the moral law*, we will attempt to refute the objection, and show, that so far from making void the law, it establishes the law.—The remark of

Dr. White is too valuable to be omitted here—"The moral law still continues in its original force; for it had not its foundation in any partial or occasional reasons, which only apply, like the Jewish law, to a particular community, and are only ordained to answer a particular and temporary design: on the contrary, it is closely connected with the primitive laws of nature, and the unalterable constitution of things; it has its foundation in causes, which can never cease to operate on rational beings, and which are universal and perpetual."\* So far from Jesus in his doctrine and in his life making void the law, he expressly declared that he came to fulfil it, and that neither jot nor tittle of it should fail. The law of God was in the heart of Christ, and all its moral precepts were practised in his life in the highest perfection. Those must be strangers to the virtue of the Gospel who perceive not therein the morality of the law as taught by Jesus, and practised by his disciples. The unity of the Godhead, Mark xii. 22, 32, John x. 29, 30—love to God and our neighbour, Luke x. 27—obedience to parents, Luke ii. 51, Mat. xv. 4—(vices are prohibited)—prophane swearing, Mat. v. 33, 37—murder, Mat. xix. 18, 1 John iii. 15—adultery, Mat. v. 27, 28—theft, Mat. xv. 19, 20, 1 Cor. vi. 10—false witness, Luke iii. 15—covetousness, Luke xii. 15—therefore, while these moral virtues, taught by the law, are found in the Gospel, and practised by Christians, they cannot be chargeable with making void the law.

'The force of the objection, however, appears to exist against *the law of faith*, commanding its subjects to embrace Christ as the sole ground of their justification

at the bar of God. But in this we establish the law. Jesus both lived and died for us. Not only every precept of the law was honoured by his obedience for us, but every penalty of the law he suffered in our stead. Jesus substituted our persons and our guilt. *The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all*, and by his obedience and death, he was declared to be *the Lord our righteousness*. Thus the spirit of the law of faith teacheth us that Jesus was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification. He that believeth is justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. It is, therefore, granted, that every believer renounces all dependance on the law of Moses for his personal justification; for this plain reason, he is a sinner, condemned by that law, and every time he reviews its precepts, the fire of indignation flashes on his conscience. He is, therefore, *dead to the law*. His only life is in Christ, and in him he lives. This sentiment is the grand peculiarity of the Gospel, and distinguisheth it from every other system of religion in the world. On this foundation peace flows to the heart; all besides is sea, sinks under us, bestorms, and then devours. True, agreeable to the argument of Paul, connected with our text, *boasting is excluded*. The pride of man is stained, and the Lord alone is exalted in the righteousness of his Son. The merits of Jesus answer every demand of the law against us, while the testimony of faith and the fruits of grace answer every requirement of the law in us. The righteousness of Jesus, which is, at the same time, *the righteousness of the law*, and the *righteousness of God*, leads us to God, creates peace in the conscience, and influences to every good word and work, whether it be required by the law, or taught by the Gospel. Thus we establish the



law, we own its authority, believe its fulfilment in the person of Jesus, whose we are, and whom we desire to serve.

Go, you that rest upon the law,  
And toil and seek salvation there,  
Look to the flames that Moses saw,  
And shrink, and tremble, and despair.

But I'll retire beneath the cross,  
Saviour, at thy dear feet I lie,  
And the keen sword that Justice draws,  
Flaming and red, shall pass me by.

*Watts' Lyric.*

Is the moral law a *sufficient* rule for a Christian? It undoubtedly is for his *moral* conduct before men; but, it by no means is adequate to direct and govern him in his *walk with God*. The Christian needs daily repentance, mortification of the corrupt propensities of his heart, and submission under afflictive dispensation, to gain victory over the temptations of satan, to worship and honour God as the God of all grace; to direct and assist him in which there is not one word in all the moral law as given by Moses. That law represents our Creator in no other light than the God of nature, nor gives the least aid to those who have transgressed its precepts; but in the Gospel, which is *the law of faith*, there is every direction for our moral conduct, and for our obedience, sanctification, communion, and happiness in God as our Father in Christ Jesus: therefore, if the ministration of the law of Moses was glorious, much more doth the law of faith in Christ exceed in glory.



As both precept and penalty are essential to the nature of law, we are ready to add, the law of faith hath its penalties for those who are under its authority. Not death, for Jesus saith, *He that believeth in me shall never die.*—The Lord knows how to bring his people to obedience without sending them to hell; he can send a sort of hell into them, by withdrawing his sensible presence from them, and raising the necessary conviction of their own folly. *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.*

Our concluding remark will be to specify the authority of Christ to introduce this new law of faith, the Gospel, in contradistinction from the law of Moses. This does not so much arise from his divinity, IMMANUEL, GOD WITH US, as his character and office of KING IN ZION, his triumphs on the cross, and the power of his grace in the formation of his spiritual kingdom. He had a right to rule over the people whom he had purchased with his blood, and for them only the law of faith is revealed. Thus *they are under law to Christ.* Every precept is expressive of his wisdom, and commanded in love. It is, indeed, the perfect law of liberty; no hard service—nothing forbidden but what would be injurious for us to possess—nothing commanded but what constitutes our highest honour and pleasure to perform. Glorious is our King! vast the extent of his dominion! invaluable the privileges he bestows! and ineffably sweet the obedience he requires! Therefore it is we place the crown upon

his head, as worthy to receive honour, and power, and glory, by all on earth, and by all in heaven.

Let us then conclude with the pious wish of David,  
*O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!*  
*Quicken me after thy loving kindness; so shall I keep*  
*the testimonies of thy mouth. O how love I thy law!*  
*it is my meditation all the day. Thy testimonies have*  
*I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoic-*  
*ing of my heart. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel,*  
*and afterwards receive me to glory.*

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## LECTURE XX.

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### THE MOST ENDEARING CHARACTER OF GOD.

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1 JOHN iv. 16.

*God is love.*

All my treasure is above,  
All my riches is thy love;  
Who the worth of love can tell?  
Infinite! unsearchable!

THE knowledge of God is essential to human felicity. But however a general consent may exist among savage and civilized nations, that there is a God, our ideas of his nature and perfections are, by sin, so gross, that *the world by wisdom knows not God*. It hath, therefore, pleased the Lord to make a new discovery of himself in his word, and through the supernatural teaching of the Spirit of Christ, that according to his invaluable promise, *They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest of them, saith the Lord*. Looking for this sacred instruction, we are now to meditate upon the most endearing character of God, which is announced in the words of our text, *God is love*. May the fruit of the subject be richly diffused in every heart!

GOD is a Spirit infinite and immense. He is a Being justly to be contemplated, as possessing neither parts nor passions, declared in his word to be the *invisible, immortal, and eternal God*. Still he is revealed as possessing *anger, love*, with other parts and passions peculiar to humanity. Two reasons may be assigned for this. To suit the powers of our ideas, for we know nothing of

pure spirit, but by the use of matter ; and thus by the *eye* of God we learn his *wisdom*, by his *arm* his *power*, by his *heart* his *love*. The other reason is inseparably connected with the designs of his grace in Jesus, *Immanuel, God with us* ; in whom, and by whom, through the mirror and attributes of our nature, which he hath assumed, we behold the most astonishing display of the wisdom, power, truth, and love of God ! All the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in him bodily ; and he is, in himself, and to us, *the image of the invisible God*. It is worthy of your attention that John, by our text, does not assert that God is *loving*, nor that he is *lovely* ; though these are precious truths, and to be learned from many other parts of Scripture. But he announces the essential, underived nature of God to be LOVE, and to this view only our present meditations are to be confined.

LOVE constitutes the essential, underived, and eternal *blessedness* of God ; he is therefore styled *the ever-blessed God*. No truth is more evident than that the passion of love in the human breast, in its gratification of desired objects, creates felicity. To which also we may add, that self-love is the dictate of the pure law of God to man ; but from the extreme corruption of the passions in the human soul by sin, man knows very little indeed what pure self-love means. If this passion was unalloyed, it would make him as a rational creature, so far happy in himself. But the case is the reverse, so much so, that although love be the most sensible of all the passions, it is at the same time the most difficult to define or to explain. Some poets, therefore, have represented *love* as blind. In God it is the reverse. Love in God takes not its rise from any of the celestial or human productions of his hand. It is self-existent, increased

nor diminished by the condition of any creatures in heaven or in earth. His eternal love is in harmony with the inconceivableness of his nature, and with the perfection of his holiness; of course it is from this self-existent fountain that all the purposes and counsels of Jehovah proceed, relative to the operations of his hand, to his numberless rational creatures, human and angelic. *The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations.* While, therefore, it is with great imperfection of knowledge we can explore the fountain of love in God, we are certain as that constitutes the blessedness of Jehovah, so, from thence flow those streams of blessedness which constitute the felicity and glory of his intelligent creatures. To guard against a misapplication of this subject, it is of the highest consequence we assert, that although the love of God constitutes his own essential blessedness, it is in perfect unison with the veracity of his word, and with the inflexibility of his justice; so that no mortal may with impunity trespass upon the love and beneficence of God. This, however, is too frequently the case, by many unguarded and sinful human beings, to the hardening of their hearts in sin, and their everlasting confusion.

Let us conclude from these observations, that God, who is love, essentially and underived, while he is himself the centre of his own blessedness and felicity, and is the fountain of all goodness and happiness to his people, is a divine object of the highest perfection and grandeur, justly claiming the most ardent praises of all in heaven and of all on earth.

With the Bible in our hand, while we believe in the unity of the divine nature, that God is One, we are also instructed that God is revealed in the three characters



er relations of FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, for the august display of the divine attributes in the redemption of sinners. In each, with each, and to each of those persons or characters, there is existing, and is most divinely displayed, that affection, delight and glory, which leads us to take the text as appropriate to each severally, and to the whole personally, in the union of the divine essence, *God is love. Thus, there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit; and these three are one; one in nature, in counsel, in grace, and in everlasting love. The Father loveth the Son, who is emphatically styled, the Beloved. The Son testified his love to the Father in obedience to his will, to his law, and to all the sufferings which were allotted him as Mediator and our Redeemer; that, said he, the world may know that I love the Father. And it is equally true that the love of the Spirit was with the Father and the Son, by his holy operations upon the Son, and the communications of grace to his people to bring them to glory. While, therefore, the displays of grace evince the glory of God in the salvation of men, every part of that salvation, in its plan, operation, execution, and completion, declares the unity and preciousness of that eternal love which subsisted between Jehovah the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.*

“O wondrous love—O love to be ador’d”—

“O mightiest proof to man, that God is love!”

It is necessary for us to inquire into some of the properties of the love of God. Certainly we must say, as there can be no cause for this arising from the creature, but existing in God only, it must be *everlasting love*. And

God can love with no other than what consists with his own nature. It is immutable and invariable, *whom he loveth, he loveth unto the end*; he resteth in his love; and, like himself, *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*; *I am the Lord, I change not.*

Although I did not intend in this discourse to take notice of the rich and inexhaustible *expressions* of God's love in the person, gift, sufferings, death, and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; yet the meditation of the essential nature of God, as *love*, should create in us the most sublime reverence and adoration of his eternal Majesty. If a sip at the streams of love should exhilarate our joy; surely an approach to the fountain should afford us greater pleasure. As I feel myself incompetent to offer any thing farther at present, sentimentally, upon the subject of the essential nature of God, as *love*, I shall conclude by a few addresses.

1. Those of you, my fellow-sinners, who live in a course of rebellion against God, should seriously reflect that you are perpetually sinning against a GOD OF LOVE. This should wound your conscience most sensibly, and produce tears of contrition. Yes, against the goodness, beneficence, and love of God, all your crimes are committed. Ah, how cursed that enmity which lodges in your heart, and which you express in numberless ways by your words and sinful actions against the God of love! This, surely, must enhance the magnitude of your crimes, and leave you without excuse, and justly self-condemned. I pray these reflections may be the mean of overcoming your rebellious hearts, and lead you, with deep contrition, for mercy to the God of sovereign love!

2. It is a possible case for conscious sinners to remain long in conflict with the guilt, hardness, and unbelief of

their hearts, without obtaining relief. If this is your case, remember my present subject is to you of the greatest importance. *He that cometh to God, must believe that he is*—that he is such a God as he hath revealed himself to be; a God of love. This conviction will soften your heart, and encourage your hope. And, until you attain this persuasion, there is nothing to aid your steps in peace. Look for a moment on Jesus, the gift of the Father's love; visit Gathsemane's garden, and mark the tears, the sweat, the blood, and the agonies of the Son of God! ascend mount Calvary, and there see Jesus on the cross, clothed in a vesture dipt in his own blood, and his soul making an offering for sin under the inconceivable displays of vindictive justice! For whom?—For sinners—for the vilest of the vile. All, all to prove and to illustrate the truth of my text, that *God is love*. O that some heavenly ray of this eternal love may fall upon your hearts, and lead you with joy to embrace Jesus as your beloved Saviour and your dearest friend!

3. Those of you who are placed in the family of grace, should more frequently dwell upon the love of God in your meditations. The history of your conversion; your introduction to the courts of Zion; the numberless communications of power, truth, peace, joy, and deliverance, under all the changes of your lives; these unite with the testimony of Scripture, and create in your souls a solid and lively assurance, that *God is love*. From the fountain of his love you derive all the blessedness of your souls; and it is from the same source all your future supplies must be obtained. You are not ignorant of the Scripture maxim, *We love him because he first loved us*. Who can but love that feels the presence of a God of love? Go on, then, in the discharge of every duty, to

testify your gratitude to so good a God. He is your loving Father. Jesus will love you to the end. In all your afflictions try to read the love of God in them; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. As you have found *Mary's* place at the feet of Jesus, and have once and again expressed your sensibility in tears of grief mingled with love, let me exhort you to rise and find *John's* place upon the bosom of your Lord! There you will taste the riches of his dying love; there you will feel a degree of heaven below; and there you will rejoice in prospect of soon launching into the ocean of eternal love, in the bright realms above, to sing in higher and more loftier strains, that GOD IS LOVE! Amen.

Each moment draw from earth away  
My heart, that lowly waits thy call;  
Speak to my inmost soul, and say,  
I am thy love, thy God, thy all!  
To feel thy pow'r, to hear thy voice,  
To taste thy love, be all my choice.

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## LECTURE XXI.

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### *THE AFFLICTED YOUTH BROUGHT TO JESUS.*

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LUKE ix. 41, 42.

*Jesus said, Bring thy son hither. And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down and tare him: and Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.*

Cast out thy foes, and let them still  
To thy great name submit;  
Clothe with thy righteousness, and heal;  
And place me at thy feet.

From sin, the guilt, the power, the pain,  
Thou wilt relieve my soul;  
Lord I believe, and not in vain,  
For thou wilt make me whole.

AMONG the many cases which occurred under the immediate ministry of Jesus Christ, few are more worthy our attention than that of the youth possessed with a dumb and unclean spirit. This, indeed, must have been considered a very singular instance of cure at the time it was performed, as Matthew, Mark, and Luke, severally have placed it on record. It is generally believed, that this young person's case included both body and soul; and that both were the subjects of Christ's instantaneous cure. Besides, what Jesus did for the afflicted and distressed during his personal residence on earth, he still continues to perform for sinners, in every age, by the power of his sovereign grace. This makes the present piece of history still more interesting to us. There are few instances of sinners brought to Christ by the operations



of grace, without experiencing some conflicts of heart, and vile temptations from satan. And there have been, and still are, some cases of anguish and despair, which bear a very striking analogy to that of this afflicted youth. We will, therefore, make it the subject of our present reflections, in expectation of some relief to the depressed mind, and of its creating in our breasts lively emotions of gratitude to Jesus, the physician of value, and the friend of sinners.

The case of this young person, collected from the different Evangelists, was truly distressing. He was possessed of a *dumb spirit*; an *unclean spirit*; the *devil*; a *foul spirit*; which, collectively, signify his being influenced by *the wicked one*, in the highest degree possible. It is also said, *He was lunatic,\* and foamed at the mouth*; *he gnashed with his teeth, and cried out*; *he was sore vexed, falling into the water, and oftentimes into the fire*; of course *he bruised himself and pined away*. This statement corresponds with Epilepsy, or falling-sickness; and may designate the disease of his body, in addition to that of his soul, rendering his case deplorable indeed! But, what was an addition to his affliction, his father asserted, *he had been so from a child*. This young man, while his disease rendered him useless to society, and a burden to himself, must certainly have been a source of continued affliction to his parents and his family. Such domestic sorrows demand our commiseration. However affecting this case may appear, and however some

\* The present celebrated Benjamin Mosely, M. D. on the influence of the moon, mentions this very case. "Epileptic, and not insane people," says the Doctor, "are, properly speaking, lunatic." See his *Treatise on Tropical Diseases*, &c. p. 642. 4th edition.

may be indisposed to credit our assertion, we are obliged to declare, that there are instances of equal wretchedness which frequently occur. Man, on his first creation, was decoyed into sin by the same malignant spirit, in form of a serpent; and, although when Christ was on earth, there were many instances of satan visibly and bodily possessing men, perhaps in a manner seldom known in this day; yet, *the same spirit now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience*. If we may not see the features of the devil in men, as were visible in the first age of Christianity, a little attention to the temper and conduct of men will convince us that the infernal agent has not departed from the earth. In the case of the unhappy youth, he was possessed by a *dumb spirit*; one I suppose who did not speak for truth, for God, nor for Christ. An *unclean spirit*, whose employ was to defile the heart and debase the body, in the sight of God and man. A *foul spirit*, blaspheming, and making the man meet only to dwell in the regions of infernal darkness. Now, if we look around mankind, we shall certainly find too many whose intemperance, prophaneness, and blasphemy, really evince that they are possessed by the devil in no small degree. As it was with the young man, so we are obliged to acknowledge our sinful disease is *from youth*, and by which men are led astray into the paths which end in bitterness and death. May a due sense of our guilty and depraved state produce in us an ardent desire to fly to Jesus, who is able to save to the utmost!

This poor young man had a father, whose heart must be allowed most sensibly to feel for his afflicted child. Anxious to try every expedient to eject the evil spirit from his son, he carried him to the disciples; but the

devil was too hard for them. How natural is it for us, first to apply to men and creatures ! and how just is it in the Lord to disappoint our expectations ! The father next applied to Christ, saying, *Lord, if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.* It was both natural and commendable for the father to make his son's interest his own, and to ask in his own person ; but it is astonishing that he should address Jesus in the language of so much unbelief, *If thou canst do any thing* : whereas, on such an occasion, he ought rather to have said, " Lord, since thou canst do all things, help me." This circumstance, while it calls for wonder at the afflicted father, may remind us how often we have addressed the Saviour with a much greater mixture of ignorance and unbelief. But the compassions of Jesus looked at the heart, and passed by the imperfections of the earnest petitioner. O the benevolence and the forbearance of our adored Saviour ! After giving a very necessary admonition to his disciples Jesus said to the father of the youth, *Bring him unto me.*

Now, another part of the affecting scene opens, and demands our attention. The youth advanced ; and, when in sight of Christ, the devil exerted his infernal efforts ; threw down the youth, tearing him in such an astonishing manner, that he lay upon the ground foaming and wallowing. This brought a number of people together, whose attention and pity were raised on behalf of the young man, whom many of them concluded was really dead. Jesus, in the midst of the crowd, full of compassion, cried, *Come out of him thou unclean spirit, and enter no more into him.* Instantly the devil departed from him ; and Jesus took him by the hand, and he arose, and delivered him to his father. What a proof is this

single instance, that the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil ! The case of this young man is certainly a very lively description of converted sinners in coming to Jesus. It was a singular favour that this youth had a father who could tell him of the Saviour ; and it is an equal privilege for any one convinced of sin to set under an evangelical ministry, possess the attention of a Christian friend, and especially to have a tender parent, who, instead of conducting him in paths of error or of carnal pleasures to stifle the convictions of conscience, will point him to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. And, I may also add, delightful and honourable is it to be the happy instrument, by advice and by prayer, to take a convinced sinner by the hand, and tell him of a Saviour's love and unbounded grace ! May such employ daily increase !—To return to the young man : No sooner was he on his way to Christ, than the devil increased his distress ; and when brought within the presence of the physician, he was torn and cast down to the earth. Let men stay away from Jesus, and satan will keep them undisturbed ; but when once they are alarmed, their conscience is convinced ; and desire and hope are exercised for obtaining pardon from the Saviour : then the grand adversary levels his infernal darts, and torments the heart with unbelief, guilt, fear, and ten thousand evils, unfelt before. However, even these exercises, distressing and painful as they may be, are certainly useful, as they tend to show us the greater depravity of our hearts, the inability of creatures to relieve, and to magnify the power and grace of Jesus in our salvation. So true is it, *they that be whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick.* No man would ever fly for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before him in the



Gospel, until convinced of the danger of perishing in sin. If this be your case, take encouragement from the relief obtained by this young man. Had we been present at the scene, with what tender emotions of soul should we have beheld the blessed Jesus stretch forth his hand, raise the tormented youth from his misery, and then present him in health to the embraces of his tender father! What eye could have witnessed this scene, without starting the tear of sensibility? The same Jesus is as full of compassion now; he is as able to save you from sin and from satan. And, remember, that the lower you lay at the feet of Jesus, the more welcome will his mercy be to your heart. Can your case be more complicated and wretched than this youth possessed by the devil? Surely not. Let the invitation of Jesus encourage your approach. *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Take him at his word, and salvation is your own.

The issue of this miraculous cure of the lunatic is worthy of observation. *All the people were amazed at the power of God.* Well might they, and well might we. If Jesus had not been IMMANUEL, God with us, the devil would not have departed from the youth, nor his father sent home with joy. Nothing more illustrates the Godhead of Christ than the conversion of a sinner. What opinion, think you, could this young man have formed of Jesus? That he was a mere man? No. He had been carried to his disciples, some of the best of men, and they could not relieve him. Every converted sinner is a living witness of the divinity of Christ; and every one glorifies him as God over all, blessed for evermore! Besides, this young man, who had received such virtue from Christ, could never have forgotten his kind bene-



factor. Cured of the most desperate malady, by the speaking of a word, without money and without price ; surely his heart must have overflowed with gratitude and praise. Men may talk of Jesus the Saviour, as worthy of our praise ; but certain I am, that none are competent to render him the praise he demands, but those who have actually experienced the healing of his grace. If you are such, you need not my aid to remind you of your dutiful obligation. Time, talents, body, soul, all are engaged to honour his holy name. Besides, while you are a sojourner in this vale of tears, you must expect to find frequent need of Christ to defend you from the assaults of satan. Although the infernal spirit knows he cannot finally destroy you, he will leave no method untried to perplex your minds, and to lead you to neglect your duty to Jesus the Physician of your souls. Remember, your having already, like the young man, received favour from Christ, is an argument which should encourage you to apply to him in time of need. And certain I am, the more you feel his power to heal, the more you will be disposed to honour him in every duty, and in every part of your lives. In this employ, may you pass your days, and rejoice in hope of rendering more perfect praise in the regions of eternal bliss!

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## LECTURE XXII.

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### THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN UNDER THE SIMILITUDE OF A LAMB.

JOHN xxi. 15.

*Feed my lambs.*

O might we lean upon that breast  
Which love and pity fill;  
And now become those lambs carets'd,  
That in thy bosom dwell!

UNDER the beautiful emblem of a lamb, it is presumed our Lord intended to commit to the ministerial care of Peter, those young converts who, by his grace, were introduced to the duties and experiences of the Christian life. As the duty enjoined upon Peter is equally binding upon every Minister of Christ, I shall attempt to discharge it by explaining the first stage of the Christian's experience under the similitude of a LAMB; and then offer such ADVICE as may tend to their advantage.

1. The LAMB is a well known emblem of innocence, and, as such, is descriptive of that purity of intention, hatred of sin, and thirst after holiness, which is characteristic of that person who is born again of the Spirit of the Lord. *God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.* The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, teacheth to deny all ungodliness and wordly lust; and creates a spiritual disposition to obey the known will of God; follow after the example of Jesus the Shepherd of Israel, and thus to *perfect holiness in the fear of God.* The Spirit of God, in his operations, can never

dictate nor produce, contrary to his own holy nature; therefore the new born soul hates sin for its vileness as well as for its condemning consequence. And, as sin is a monster with many heads, the Christian convert would not willingly, nor allowedly, spare one of them, however pleasing such might have been to him in the days of his unregeneracy. Purity is the spiritual element of a believer: the bird that mounts the air could sooner exist in the waters of the sea, than a man, in the exercise of grace, can enjoy the pleasures of sin, though it were for a season.

In the early experience of some persons, in the duties of abstinence, peculiarities in dress, with other externals, there may be evident marks of *extreme*; and be apt to unchristian those who, in such things, may not be so precise as themselves. Paul, for ought I know, referred to such a temper in his juvenile state, when he said, *When I was a child, I thought as a child, I spake as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.* Happy would it be if we could prevail upon young Christians to meliorate their judgment, and duly consider the circumstances of education, habit, office, rank, or station, which may dictate to other persons in such extras beyond their own practices; and also, to make a necessary distinction between such little punctilios, and the transgressions, whether of law or Gospel. However, he that is born of God sinneth not with intention; in all the exercises of his heart, and in all the regulations of his life, he wishes to approve himself unto God, and, if possible, to live as innocent as a lamb.

2. Nature directs the lamb, instantly on its birth, to seek its dam for sustenance; and grace stimulates the young Christian to apply, by faith, and by prayer, to

Jesus, for such enjoyments as may satisfy the heart. No sooner was Saul, the persecuting lion of Tarsus, changed into the temper of a lamb, than it was said, *Behold he prayeth.* Those lips which pronounced threatenings against the ransomed flock of Jesus, now, by the grace of God, cry, *Lord what wouldst thou have me to do?* While a Pharisee, Paul attended the appointed hours of prayer in the Synagogue; but he was a stranger to the power and spirit of prayer until Christ met with him on his journey to Damascus. And the history of his future life sufficiently evinces, that *his fellowship was with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* As respiration is an evidence of life, so no greater proof need be sought to prove the reality of the new birth than a praying heart. Neither nature, sin, nor satan could inspire a soul with such holy breathings, amidst such innumerable and powerful oppositions which surround the soul. No, they could be produced only by the power, and by the Spirit of the Lord! Nor is this the outcry of conscience for a moment; but, as the lamb incessantly draws the aliment of sustenance from the animal that gave it birth, so the Christian *gives himself unto prayer* to that Almighty Lord, who in his providence and in his grace *holdeth our souls in life.*

3. How active is the tender lamb upon the green pasture? What scene more charming than the tender flock, while the sun reflects its cheering rays upon the fertile plain? Such is the young convert in the lively exercise of *first love* to Jesus the dear object of his soul! The mind newly opened to see the beauties of Immanuel, the lips formed to taste the sweets of mercy, and the glories of an eternal world, what should prevent the soul from triumphing in God its Saviour? For, at this period, it pleaseth

God neither to clog the heart with too great a rising of corruption, nor allow the infernal powers violently to assail with temptations ; sufficient is it to feel so much guilt and condemnation as to lead the mind to see a need of Jesus and of complete redemption. The deeper sense of sin, and stronger conflict with awful powers of darkness, are usually left to an after stage ; when, by age, by strength, and by experience, the man may pass from the denomination of a *lamb* to a *sheep* in the fold of Christ. The vivacity of a young convert is expressed by his spiritual conversation in the social circle ; by his aptness to spiritualize the beauties of nature and the productions of art ; by his competency to apply the variety of promises to his heart ; by his diligence in reading and hearing the Gospel ; by his cheerfulness in private and in social prayer ; and by the charming delight with which he commends the dear object of his affections, Christ Jesus. In these, and in many other ways, the young Christian expresses the warmth of his zeal and the delight of his soul. Happy the days of our espousals to Christ !

Sweet was the time when first I felt  
The Saviour's pardoning blood,  
Apply'd to cleanse my soul from guilt,  
And bring me home to God.

Soon as the morn the light reveal'd,  
His praises tun'd my tongue ;  
And when the evening shades prevail'd,  
His love was all my song !

4. How insensible is the tender lamb of the enemies which surround it, and the dangers to which it is exposed !



Just so the young Christian. These dangers arise from every source, except it be from his God ; all safety there ; disappointment, vexation, grief, and danger, are in every thing else. His own heart ; the depth of hell ; the vanities and evils of the world ; these afford an infinite number of the most inveterate foes. Yet, what little experience have young Christians with these, except it be by name ? For this reason it is those who are farther advanced in life, and by painful experience have known the severity of conflict, that exercise the greatest tenderness and compassion for the lambs of the flock ; and, on this account, having shown you the comparison between the innocent, tender, sportive, defenceless lamb, and a young Christian, I shall offer you, according to promise, a little friendly advice.

1. Esteem it your high privilege to ascertain the reality of your state as a lamb of Christ. Sin is deceitful, and the heart is capable of deceiving itself in the most important concerns. Be not afraid, therefore, to know the worst of yourself. Take time for examination. Be instant in prayer for the light of God to shine upon your heart, and suffer no evidences to satisfy you but such as are recorded for those who are called by the voice of the Shepherd. Early learn to make the necessary distinction between *grace* and its *fruit*, your *hope* and your *comforts*, your *faith* and your *feelings*. A mere professor hath nothing but his feelings to live upon, and in an hour of darkness he falls away ; whereas, the believing lambs of Jesus *live by faith*. Better have one dram of Gospel faith than to live many years by simple sense, and upon your own feelings, which at best are as variable and uncertain as the wind. Nevertheless, when your comforts flow from establishment on the *rock of ages*, and you have *joy and*

*peace in believing*, you may be pronounced happy, and exhorted to testify your gratitude to that dear Shepherd who thus *maketh you to lie down in green pastures*. Look perpetually by faith to Jesus, the SHEPHERD who hath bought you with his blood, and who, in mercy, hath called you by his grace. Contemplate his suitableness, his fulness, and his glory; trusting him for all you need. It is his province, as your Shepherd, to go before you, and to prepare food, both temporal and spiritual, for you in the wilderness; and to bear you up amidst the sufferings of your life. He hath promised to *feed you as a lamb in a large place*. He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. What then should hinder you from exclaiming, The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want! Pray that you may form correct views of truth as it is in Christ, and be consistent with your religious profession. Cultivate a warm heart to those with whom you are in Gospel union: at the same time, indulge benevolence and candour to all persons who profess to follow Jesus according to the light they have received, though of a different denomination. As an excellent person hath observed, “Young converts are generally great bigots. When we are first converted to God, our brotherly affections too often resemble the narrowness of a river at its first setting out; but as we advance nearer to the great ocean of all good, the channel widens, and our hearts expand, more and more, till death perfectly unites us to the source of uncreated love.” Equally true is it [that young Christians are apt to select those parts of Scripture for their study which relate to the purposes and decrees of Jehovah, which require a more mature judgment, and extensive experience. Therefore, I intreat you to take David for your example, whose humility in

this instance is worthy your attention. *Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.* As the lamb, of all animals, is the most liable to wander, take heed you do not depart from the living God. Often set before you the affecting consequences of *Peter following afar off*. Few converts but at some period have made Peter's case their own. Be not high-minded, but fear. Lay low at your Shepherd's feet. Dread the thought of living one moment without your Saviour's sensible care. Abide by the companions of the flock, and be not as a lonely lamb without a fold. Perhaps your life may be but short, and death may soon advance to transmit you to an eternal world. Happy, triumphant change! removed from your Shepherd's breast below, to live beneath his glorious smiles above for evermore!

Some, perhaps, who hear this lecture may be conscious that you are not entitled to the character of a young Christian. Whether you disapprove the character or the Gospel in which it is described, is not for me to determine. I would rather hope, you wish it was your own. That the lambs of the flock are inestimably dear to Jesus, the good Shepherd, is not only certain from his charge to Peter to feed them, but from the many promises of his gracious supply and tender affection. May that blessed Shepherd gather you with his arm, and carry you in his bosom! I shall only add, it is wished that those who are Christians indeed, and of long experience, may, by this discourse, bring to recollection your early experience, and with greater confidence and joy live beneath your Shepherd's care, and incessantly speak his boundless praise!

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## LECTURE XXIII.

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### THE MORAL CHARACTER OF JESUS:

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JOHN vii. 12.

*Some said, He is a good man : others said, Nay ; but he deceiveth the people.*

Thy bright example may we trace  
To teach us what we ought to be ;  
Make us by thy transforming grace,  
Dear Saviour, daily more like thee.

*Steele.*

ON the perfection of the moral character of Jesus, the hopes of his disciples must stand or fall. It therefore becomes necessary to read the history of his life, and endeavour to attain satisfaction on a subject of such infinite importance.

BENEVOLENCE, TRUTH, DEVOTION, and MAGNANIMITY, being generally esteemed the principal features in a complete human character ; these shall direct us in our present inquiry.

1. BENEVOLENCE is a love to mankind, with a desire to promote their interest, under the many infirmities of human life. This accords with the dignity of our nature ; and is founded upon the requisition of God's law, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. A conviction of this truth dictated an heathen philosopher to say, " He was born, not for himself only, but for his friends." Indeed, the present state of man, loaded with evils, and exposed to numberless sorrows, requires the exercise of benevolence, charity, and kindness ; a considerable share



of which we have every reason to expect should be possessed by every man who assumes the teacher, and asserts his mission is from above. The least acquaintance with the history of Jesus of Nazareth will convince us, that his heart was made of tenderness, and that he went about perpetually doing good to his enemies, as well as to his friends. He was continually engaged in acts of pure benevolence ; instructing the ignorant, and introducing them to the paths of bliss ; explaining the nature of the law ; unfolding the great principles of natural religion ; collecting evidences from the Jewish records concerning the promised Messiah ; and convincing the polluted hearts of men, of the necessity of a ransom in order to their everlasting salvation. His first sermon on the Mount, a specimen of his excellent ministry, outvies the most elaborate human composition ; and, in his parable of the good Samaritan, how charmingly does he commend benevolence to the unfortunate ! No action did Jesus reprehend but what was injurious ; no duty did he enjoin but what was immediately the interest of his disciples to perform. With confidence we affirm, never was fallen nature exhibited in its true colours until Jesus opened his lips ; nor did any ever propose a remedy adequate to its accumulated miseries, until he showed us his bleeding heart ! *His doctrine dropped as the rain, his speech distilled as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.* Never man spake like this man ! And although, according to prophecy, and to remove the incredulity of the Jews, it became necessary to confirm his doctrine by miracles, none of them were ever performed without the most benevolent designs of convincing the ignorant, and of conferring blessings upon the bodies and



the souls of men. If the forgiveness of injuries be another evidence of benevolence, this virtue was remarkably conspicuous in the doctrine and in the life of Jesus Christ. A desire for revenge is natural to the depraved heart; vain philosophers, in almost every age, have considered the gratification of this passion essential to constitute honour. But Jesus said unto his disciples, *Ye have heard, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy; but, I say unto you, love your enemies; bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.* This doctrine, however new, or seldom practised, is as interesting to the peace of society, as it is ornamental to individuals. Nor does it require much acquaintance with the history of Jesus to convince us, that amidst the blaze of moral excellence which shone from his breast, HE WAS READY TO FORGIVE. Notwithstanding the contradiction of sinners which he endured, *when he was reviled, he reviled not again*; expressing the most tender compassion for his enemies; and, when in the agonies of death, his benevolent heart interceded for his tormentors. Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends; but Christ died for his very enemies. This, he repeatedly declared, was the end for which he came into the world; and, by the cheerful voluntary surrender of himself to the sorrows of death, and to the stroke of justice, he gave an incontestible proof of his benevolence. These are a few of the expressions of that pure benevolence possessed by the heart of Jesus; the contemplation of which must compel us to venerate his name.

2. The next essential trait in a virtuous human character is TRUTH; without which the most extensive show of BENEVOLENCE leaves the heart contaminated and

obnoxious. Truth is a girdle which binds all other virtues to the soul, and enables the possessor to pass through life under the approbation of that God who *desireth truth in the inward parts*. With this principle Jesus was actuated in every part of his conduct; thereby confirmed the prophecy concerning the Messiah, that *righteousness should be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins*. When Pilate asked Jesus, if he were a king? he replied, *Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth*. Jesus did so in all the variety of truth, and on every occasion worthy the dignity of man, and the invariable acquirement of heaven. It is well known that Jesus entered on his public life when the Jews were ripe for scrutinizing the claims that might be made to Messiahship. We know also that they expected the Messiah to come, in all possible worldly magnificence. Now, if Jesus had been actuated by a base, sordid principle, he might have availed himself of this opportunity; embraced the kingly offers which were made to him; and, like Mahomet, the prophet of Arabia, he might have accumulated riches and worldly dominion. Jesus was influenced by different motives; he entered Jerusalem, according to prophecy, *lowly and riding upon an ass*, thereby evincing, that *his kingdom was not of this world*. It solicited not the protection of Emperors, nor sought the aid of civil polity to increase or to support it. If, indeed, Jesus had been actuated by falsehood or ambition, there were many periods in his life in which his enemies might have detected them. He submitted himself to the investigation of all ranks; his doctrines nor his miracles were confined to secrecy. The very doctrines of Jesus evince the purity

of his heart. They levelled at the root of hypocrisy, penetrated the soul, and exposed its most secret vices ; and, what was altogether new, he esteemed the unchaste thought of the breast equally culpable with the most glaring action of the life. Such sublime and soul-discerning sentiments, accompanied with a correspondent life, produced converts of almost every description. The perfection of the truth of Jesus, which hath cemented thousands of thousands to his cause, has been too brilliant for the powers of infidelity to invade.

3. Let us now review those devotional exercises which have characterised the life of Jesus. *DEVOTION* is the highest possible employment of the human soul ; it constitutes the glory of man, and is the very end for which he was designed. Yet, alas ! who but sensibly feels the awful distance which sin hath driven us from the supreme Object of adoration ! Jesus, however, being free from personal sin, performed every act of *worship in the beauty of holiness*. As a *Jew*, made under the ceremonial law, he was an observer of those sacred rites by which the Hebrews were to testify their obedience to Jehovah. As a man, he honoured the law of nature, by a reliance on providence ; and as a teacher from heaven, his life was absorbed in communion with his Father. The solitary mountain, and the shades of night, witnessed the fervour of his supplications. Gethsemane, in a particular manner, was honoured with a scene of devotion, the most sublimely great that human nature could be capable of offering to the Almighty ! These most solemn exercises were accompanied with such uniform complacency in the will of heaven, such an abhorrence to every species of iniquity, and such holy zeal for the honour of his Father and the salvation of men, as will

not allow us to impeach either the sincerity or the sublimity of his devotion. It is, therefore, evident, that in all the conduct of Jesus, he dared to appeal to the eye of the multitude, and to open his very soul in the eyes of heaven to witness the purity of his life. As Jesus was himself a man of prayer, in almost every discourse he enjoined upon his disciples secret, uninterrupted communion with his Father, as being absolutely necessary to their receiving open manifestation of his favour. And, since they had commenced his servants, and were anxious to promote his cause, he repeatedly assured them, that their most arduous success could alone be performed by prayer, and by fasting. A method this, we are obliged to confess, of establishing reputation and interest, entirely foreign to the conduct of a deceiver; and must therefore compel us to approve the holy person and life of Jesus.

4. The last quality in an approved character, and which constitutes a material part of human excellence, is **MAGNANIMITY**. If to bear poverty nobly, to suffer injuries with patience, and to sacrifice our wealth, repose, fame, and life, for the sake of virtue, constitute true greatness and solid glory; we dare appeal to the most avowed enemy of the Gospel for the just application of this assemblage of real excellence to the person of Jesus. He had no where to lay his head, and became of no reputation, that he might accomplish our felicity. Though often surrounded with an enraged multitude, his soul yearned at human misery, and he stretched forth his hand to relieve! In the last period of his sufferings, *he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before her shearers, so he opened not his mouth.* Though on Calvary he was exposed to unparalleled contempt, and suffered the most inconceivable tortures both



in soul and body, his magnanimity abode ; calmly he uttered a fervent prayer for his crucifiers, and then most solemnly breathed his soul into the bosom of his Father. We are obliged to say, from the history of Jesus, that those dreadful scenes did not take him by surprise. He foresaw the whole ; and long before they commenced, he forewarned his disciples of them, and said, thus it behoved him to suffer. His magnanimity, therefore, was deliberate, and not the effect of misguided zeal or untempered passion. Were it possible for his faithfulness and love to have failed, he could as easily have saved himself from the rage of his enemies, as to have resigned himself to their power. But his heart was firm ; he was born thus to suffer and to die for the glorious purpose of man's redemption.

From this review of the BENEVOLENCE, the TRUTH, the DEVOTION, and the MAGNANIMITY of Jesus, may we not most cheerfully assert, that he possessed every virtue in the highest possible perfection ? His joys were grave ; his grief just. His love was without alloy, and his benevolence shone with unrivalled glory ! His goodness, piety, inflexibility, all his excellencies were in perfect harmony with each other. His vices, or his infirmities, where are they ? *Some said he was a good man ; others said, Nay ;* but if satan retires, and can find *nothing in him*, let his inveterate enemies amongst mankind stand at an awful distance, while every friend to truth and to virtue, confirm the sentiment of Peter, *Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners !*

Whence these uncorrupted passions found with Jesus ? That heart from whence such brilliant virtues flow cannot be soiled with human guilt. What other person, however bright his virtues, but at some period of his life, hath discovered his part in universal corruption ? Jesus,



therefore, must be more than human ; and which directs our further inquiry, in hope of seeing his brighter glory. This we will attempt in our next lecture.

Meantime be not ashamed to own Jesus in the face of daring infidelity. And you who are the younger part of this family, yield not to those who lay in wait, to rob you of your attachment to Christianity. You are not called to follow a cunningly devised fable, but to rejoice in Christ Jesus, who is the perfection of truth, and worthy your most ardent praise ! Christians, as such, should glory in the virtue of the Saviour. Some infidels have dared to reflect upon the Virgin Mary ; but, it is very remarkable, scarce an individual has attempted to impeach the personal virtue of Jesus. Although some professors of religion may pay little attention to this testimony, I assure you it is of the highest importance. If the moral character of Jesus be imperfect, all, of course, which relates to his professed redemption must be of no advantage. However, while we avail ourselves of the concessions of the opposers of Jesus, we rejoice in the numberless testimonies contained in the Scriptures of his benevolence, truth, devotion, and holy magnanimity. On this, therefore, we rely, and in this will we glory !

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## LECTURE XXIV.

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### THE DIVINE NATURE OF CHRIST.

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ACTS xvii. 32.

*We will hear thee again of this matter.*

Could I but paint his beauteous name,  
Or draw the outlines of his fame,  
The world would sure enamour'd be,  
Nor one deny his DEITY.

INDEED, what matter of more consequence for us to hear and to understand than the character of Jesus? Were this in any degree imperfect, we may at once stop in a profession of his Gospel, for all beyond it must be fatal ruin! We must, however, say, there are a thousand testimonies to convince a guilty man, that he cannot save himself; and if delivered from deserved wrath, it must be by the intervention of another. Jesus of Nazareth is proposed as a Saviour. We have investigated his moral character, and are obliged to say, it was without spot or blemish; perfectly consonant to the law of humanity, and worthy its dignity. The BENEVOLENCE and TRUTH of his soul, the DEVOTION and MAGNANIMITY of his life, were without a shade, and, as such, teach us to believe he was, indeed, *separate from sinners*. How can this thing be? Are not all men subjects of equal corruption? How can one plant in the human garden bear good fruit, when all the rest, without exception, are laden with fruit the most corrupt? Jesus must be more than human. A created angel he could not be; for, it is positively asserted, *He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham*. Nor, in the scale of

being, could two natures, human and angelic, constitute one person. To pursue our inquiry, therefore, into the person of Jesus, we must have recourse to those declarations which he made concerning himself; and also, avail ourselves of the sentiments of those who were eye and ear witnesses of all that Jesus taught and performed.

THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CONCERNING HIMSELF. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go to the Father. I and my Father are one. If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Before Abraham was, I am. All things that the Father hath are mine. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father.*

From these declarations it impartially appears Jesus claimed an equality and an unity with Jehovah; that by him alone the Father becomes manifest; that the infinite attributes and dominion of the Father were equally his; that he existed before Abraham; and that equal honours were due to him as to the Father. These sentiments are scriptural! Notwithstanding, it may be suggested, these assertions of Jesus may not be considered in an absolute, but in a subordinate degree; nor should we, at so remote an age, indulge the free exercise of implicit faith upon them. Let us then produce the opinion of those who were conversant with Jesus, and who knew both his doctrines and his real character: for this will be an effectual method of obtaining satisfaction.

ZACHARIAS, father of John the Baptist. *And thou child (i. e. John), shalt be called the prophet of the Highest;*

for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his way.—**JOHN THE BAPTIST.** I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. He saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo ! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.—**MATTHEW.** Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us.—**JOHN THE EVANGELIST.** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.—**THOMAS** said unto Jesus, My Lord, and my God.—**PETER.** Lord, thou knowest all things ; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all.—**NATHANAEL.** Rabbi, thou art the Son of God ; thou art the king of Israel.—**JOHN THE DIVINE.** There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit : and these three are one. We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. He is Lord of lords, and King of kings.—**THE WRITER TO THE HEBREWS.** God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son ; the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Jesus Christ, the same yes-

*terday, to-day, and for ever.—PAUL. Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. He is the image of the invisible God.—A COMPANY OF HIS DISCIPLES. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.* To these testimonies we may add, that MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, and JOHN, severally, have recorded certain extraordinary acts in the life of Jesus; that he healed the sick with a word; controlled the boisterous elements; subdued the rage of devils; and caused the polluted dead to live at his command; each of which, with numberless other displays of goodness and power, may justly be considered a comment upon the foregoing testimonies of the Divinity of Christ. To all which, let us add the testimony of the JEWISH NATION: *Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he said, God was his Father, making himself equal with God.*

From this exhibition of evidence it is certain that the primitive followers of Jesus perfectly understood their Master to have claimed an equality with God; and that by the displays of his glory, he was justly entitled to their worship and adoration. Had Jesus pretended an inferior, or a subordinate divinity, the Jews would not have exhibited the charge of blasphemy against him.

Now let us proceed to gain satisfaction for ourselves in the important truth of the Godhead of Christ. Surely we have advanced already far enough to believe the necessity of its being inscribed on our hearts; for, if Jesus be not what he is said to be, the Gospel must be a fable, our profession vain, and we yet in our sins. In order, therefore, to receive and to feel the force of truth, let us review the intention of the evidences already



named. I am disposed to say, that none of the witnesses among the disciples were inclined to disguise their sentiments, any more than did the Jewish counsel; they spake freely, without restraint, and believed what they said. And from this combination of testimony, ought we not to be as ready to credit the real character of Jesus as the fame of Alexander, or any other person transmitted to us by attested history? If not, surely our reason must be pronounced unreasonable. But we will go farther; we have examined the natural life of Jesus, and we find no fault in him; nor have his most inveterate enemies attempted so to do. Compare, therefore, the moral character of Jesus with his claim to the divinity, and both must stand or fall together.

How *the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Jesus bodily*, or how his divine and human natures were united, are neither necessary, nor indeed possible, for us to know. No man yet has been able to determine how his own body and spirit were united; and if man is thus a mystery to himself, why should he cavil at *the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh*? And, if the expressions of the mind, and the actions of the body, be sufficient to demonstrate, that man is a rational living being, why should we not be satisfied with the sentiments of Jesus, and the supernatural acts of his life, which proclaim *his eternal power and Godhead*? Such an extraordinary person as *Emmanuel, God with us*, became absolutely necessary to rescue us from woe. The law and the justice of Jehovah must be satisfied, or man must perish. Jesus, however pure in humanity, could not, in the scale of human being, possess more merit than for himself; nor could he by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. On the

other hand, the Godhead could never have stood in man's place, obeyed, suffered, died. But in Jesus the human and the divine natures are so united as to constitute one glorious REDEEMER and MEDIATOR, taking equal part with God and man. The manhood of Jesus corresponded with the requisitions of law and of justice ; obeyed, suffered, died ; while the infinite dignity of his person, in union with the Godhead, formed a source of the most valuable merit to redeem a number that no man can number !

It is wholly owing to the dignity of the person of Jesus, God-man, that we account for the perfections of his natural and moral life, which have been the subject of our inquiry in the preceding discourse. The *mutable* nature of man was united to the *immutability* of God. Jesus, therefore, is with propriety called the second Adam. The virtues of the first soon faded, and involved his posterity in guilt ; the second, *the Lord from heaven*, abideth in virtue, honour, and glory, for ever !

With the highest pleasure we may now invite the sensible sinner to look unto Jesus, able and mighty to save. Our Redeemer is the Lord of Host, the Holy One of Israel. None ever trusted in him and were confounded. Draw near, ye heavy laden with guilt and sorrow, Jesus shall give you rest.

Here is firm footing ; here is solid rock !

This can support us ; all is sea besides,

Sinks under us, bestorms, and then devours.

YOUNG.

Let the Christian triumph in the matchless character of Jesus, and from thence draw the satisfactory conclusion

of the reality of his religion. It is, indeed, a source of pleasure, that among the many enemies of Jesus, ancient and modern, who have ridiculed his birth, and the indigence of his disciples; who have opposed his doctrines, and vilified him as a magician for the miracles he performed, not one of them have reproached him with immorality. While this affords unspeakable pleasure to a follower of Jesus, he will not forget, that the next intention of the holy life of his Lord in fulfilling the precepts of the law, was to work out a righteousness for the justification of sinners, and to set an example that we should follow his steps. O Christian, read with joy the life and virtues of your Lord! Let benevolence, truth, piety, and fortitude reside in your breast; and be so operative in your life, that your family, the world, and the Church, may take knowledge of you, that you have indeed been with Jesus, and that *wisdom is justified of her children.*

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## LECTURE XXV.

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### ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.

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ISAIAH xii. 2.

*Behold! God is my salvation.*

Assure my conscience of her part  
In the Redeemer's blood;  
And witness thou within my heart,  
That I am born of God.

IF it be admitted that God hath wrought a salvation for sinners, then, it is as certainly consistent with his goodness to confer an assurance of that blessing, as it is necessary for their comfort to enjoy it. In our family discourses we are by no means disposed to controversy; else we might reply to those who inquire, Is assurance essential to faith? If it be essential to salvation? or, Whether a person may not go safely to heaven without such assurance? All that I shall say is, if I entrust a man of veracity with my property, shall I not possess a degree of assurance of its safety? Much more so, if I trust a God of never-failing faithfulness with the eternal concerns of my soul! The principal intent of this discourse is to show, that assurance is to be attained, and is very highly essential to the comfort of a Christian; and also, to attempt the encouragement of those who, by temptation and fear, hesitate to say, *Behold! God is my salvation.*

ASSURANCE, in scripture, is spoken of in three ways. Of the full assurance of understanding; because the mind is clearly instructed in the great things of the Gos-

pel. Of *the full assurance of faith*, because faith produces its own evidence in those who have it. Of *the full assurance of hope*, because hope is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil. But our present intention is to speak not of the *degree*, but simply of the assurance of salvation, let that degree be as small as it may. I shall show you, that God hath promised an assurance of salvation—that many have left their testimony of having enjoyed it—explain to you the ways by which it is produced and cherished—and in what manner it will prove its genuine nature.

1. God hath promised, that his people shall know and be assured of their personal interest in his salvation. In various parts of the Scripture God hath disclosed the counsels of his heart, and the riches of his grace, in bringing his people into an assurance of their relation to him, in this most comprehensive and decisive declaration: *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* This, if there were no other, is a sufficient warrant for the exercise of faith to produce an assurance of reconciliation and union with God. But the Lord hath granted us other promises of experiencing an interest in him. *They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord. I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God. Thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.* These are a few of the many unequivocal promises of God, that his people should possess the know-



ledge and assurance of their interest in him as the God of their salvation, and their everlasting portion.

2. I shall now recite a few testimonies whereby you may perceive that God is faithful to his promise, and that many have actually enjoyed an assurance of their salvation. *JOB* said, *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* *DAVID*, *The Lord is my light and my salvation.* *ISAIAH*, *Behold, God is my salvation.* *PAUL*, *We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* *JOHN*, *We know that we are of God.* Each of these testimonies are founded in knowledge and experience; and whoever reads the history of those persons, must be convinced how operative such an assurance was upon their hearts and lives. Perhaps you are disposed not to admit such honoured saints into the present case, presuming they were characters more abundantly favoured of God than we now have any reason to expect. True, God gave them great gifts, and qualified them for departments in life, in which they should display the riches of his glory; but in themselves they were sinners in common with others. *JOB* said, *Behold, I am vile;* and *PAUL* acknowledged himself *the chief of sinners.* The same Father, the same Saviour, and the same Grace, were in common for them, and equally so for us. In gifts, talents, and usefulness, there is a very great diversity; but I presume that as there is *one Lord, and one faith;* so all the children of God are alike interested in the same grace, and entitled to the same promise. This certainly opens a very great source of encouragement to you who are depressed by unbelief, and incapable of enjoying an assurance of your personal salvation. I therefore proceed,

3. To show you how it is that God creates an assurance of salvation in the breasts of his people. This is produced, efficiently, by the HOLY SPIRIT, who enlightens the mind to perceive the completeness and ability of Christ, to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him—gives faith to embrace the promise of salvation, and then sheds abroad the love of God in the heart, thereby producing pardon, peace, and joy. On this very account the influence of the Spirit is compared to a seal. The Ephesians, *after they heard the Gospel of their salvation, and had believed, they were sealed with the HOLY SPIRIT of promise, unto the day of redemption.* Remember, the Spirit of promise and the word of promise are inseparably connected in producing assurances of salvation. The promise is the grant and pledge of God to you, and the Spirit strengthens your faith, to draw the blessing of the promise from the inexhaustible fulness of Jesus the Saviour. This is God's method, and of course the only way in which you may expect assurance of your personal salvation. Plead, therefore, for this divine agent to enlighten your mind, and to seal your heart; and for your encouragement, the Saviour hath declared, *God giveth his Spirit to them that ask him.* The first three verses of the twelfth chapter of Isaiah are an epitome of the experience of all who obtain an assurance that God is their salvation.

I promised not only to show you the way in which assurance of salvation is created in the mind, but also in what ways it may be cherished. Be constant and fervent in secret prayer, and you will soon say with David, *It is good for me to draw near to God.* Look more frequently at Jesus in the fulness of his grace, and the completeness of his righteousness, and trust less to your own heart.

Study the truth of God in his word, with aspirations to God for the Spirit of truth to enrich you, and you will know the meaning of the Saviour's promise, *the truth shall make you free*. Often compare your former state of ignorance, course of sin, and disrelish of the Gospel with your present feelings, desires, and hope in Christ; and by that means you will perceive God hath done that for you in your salvation, which you could not have performed for yourself, with the united aid of men and Angels. Consider some of those great deliverances from temptation, and supports under sufferings, which God hath already performed for you, and it will cherish your assurance of his present and future care of you. In the practice of these and many other such things as might be named, you will most assuredly grow in grace. Remember, for your consolation, that Nichodemus, who went to Jesus by night, eventually grew so strong in faith, that in the face of day, he could boldly go and beg the crucified body of his Lord, when the rest of the disciples retired with dismay.

4. I shall now show you the influence which an assurance of salvation will have upon your heart and life, provided it be from God. It is to be lamented there are many professors of religion who are extremely bold and assuming concerning their professed interest in Christ; but with all their confidence, they disregard the practice of holiness in their lives. While this is to be lamented as a source of delusion to them, it forms a very rugged stumbling-block to those who are sincere and weak in the faith. I pray God to open the eyes of all such before it be too late; for, *if the light which is in them be darkness, how great is that darkness?* Permit me, therefore, to inform you; the higher you are in the knowledge and

enjoyment of Christ, the lower you will be in self-abasement, and desire to be clothed with humility. You will look with the most charming complacency upon others, whose attainments in grace are less than your own, and with tenderness take them by the hand and offer them your aid. The worth and the safety of your own soul, as saved by grace, will often dictate an affectionate prayer, that others, even the most unfortunate and abandoned, may taste the sweets of redeeming love ! Gratitude will inspire you with praises for the unbounded mercies of your Lord, and constrain you to every act of obedience, whether dictated by Law or Gospel. Your heart will be the seat of love in proportion to the sublimity and strength of your assurance, and from thence will issue an abhorrence of evil, and a superlative desire for the practice of virtue. Under the afflictions of life with which you may be visited, you will not say with the king of Egypt, *Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice ?* but, you will cheerfully acquiesce in the language of your Saviour, *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it ?* Happy, holy assurance ! May this support you under all your future sorrows ! In the privileges of the sanctuary, when hearing the Gospel, or partaking of ordinances, your assurance of salvation will enable you to enjoy them, not as a slave, but as a child at home. And when the hour of your departure by death to immortality shall arrive, the virtue of your faith shall yield its thousand sweets. If to live by faith on the Son of God has been the source of your joy, you will now be convinced that God will not forsake the work of his own hand ; for precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Faith, as the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, will yield its virtues, open to



you the joys of the blessed, and create a fore-taste of them in your own breast while passing to immortality. Trust in the Lord, and wait patiently for him, and he will soon and safely convey you to the regions of immortality and glory !

But, shall I close this discourse on assurance of salvation without affectionately addressing those who are conscious that they have no solid hope of interest in Jesus? Living without prayer ; gratifying the sinful propensities of your hearts ; confiding, notwithstanding, in your supposed merit, and neglecting the Saviour ; these are sufficient to create an assurance in your breasts, that you are not at peace with God, nor prepared for the solemnities of death and judgment. May that dear tender-hearted Shepherd, who bled for his flock, and calls them by his grace, create in your minds a conviction of your need of his mercy, and then visit you with the joys of his salvation ! He is able to save to the uttermost, and grant you an assurance of his redeeming love. May you by faith and prayer, as on the wings of a dove, fly away to a Saviour's arms, and be at rest, while your future life shall incessantly express your gratitude and praise to the God of your salvation.



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## LECTURE XXVII.

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### *THE SILENT SABBATH.*

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PSALM lxxxiv. 2.

*My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of  
the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the  
living God.*

Quite alone, and yet not lonely,  
I'll converse with Christ my friend;  
Now from public worship holden,  
I my time in pray'r will spend.  
O how blessed are the moments,  
When the Lord himself draws near,  
When I feel his gracious presence,  
And he answers to my pray'r!

IT is a misfortune attending the best of men, in their present imperfect state, that they do not properly estimate the value of their privileges until they are deprived of them. The psalm before us was evidently written when the author was separated from the public privileges of Zion; yet he evinced the ardour of his heart for their restoration, in order to his greater communion with God, and coming before him with thanksgiving. Bishop Patrick thinks it was composed by some pious Levite in the country, when Sennacherib's army had blocked up the way to Jerusalem, and hindered them from waiting upon the service of God in the temple. But the more generally received opinion is, that it was written by David, when by the providence of God, through sickness, or by the rebellion of Absalom, he was deprived of public worship. Whether under the Jewish economy, or under the Gospel dispensation, the possession of the outward forms of religion is generally found sufficient for

a mere professor; but, on being deprived of them, the mask falls off, and his religion comes to an end. Not so the men of real grace: they highly prize the external privileges of God's house; there abides within them a confidence in God, and an ardent thirst for more abundant enjoyment of him, though they may be prevented from public institutions.

This Lecture is intended chiefly for those families, or individuals, whom the Lord is pleased to deny the courts of his house, and cause them painfully to pass through what may not improperly be called a SILENT SABBATH; sincerely hoping the Lord of the Sabbath may grant a ray of his light into their gloomy chamber, or more gloomy heart.

1. I will first show you the reason why Christians are so solicitous to enjoy the public service of the Lord's day. It is the day which the Lord hath made, and peculiarly honoured by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; and is not only a day of rest from bodily labour, but designed to confer the better rest to the wearied mind. The Church, that is, an assembly of gracious people, in Scripture language, is called *the house of God*. Every sinner, on his conversion to God, like the returning prodigal, clothed with the best robe of Immanuel's righteousness, and having received the ring of love as a pledge of union, is indisputably entitled to his Father's house. Here numberless privileges are enjoyed, which at once cheer the heart, under the various sorrows incident to mortal life, and increase the soul in knowledge, faith, hope, joy, love, and every grace which can animate in prospect of future bliss! We may, therefore, with David, address the Lord and say, *Blessed is the man whom thou choosdest, and causest to approach*

unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. And, in the very Psalm before us, David recognizes the privileges of the worshippers of Jehovah. *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee. They go from strength to strength, every one of them appearing in Zion before God.* And, from the recollection of such honours and enjoyments, he concludes, *A day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.* Happy, indeed, are those on whom the Lord bestows his grace, and whose breasts contain such sublime sentiments of the public worship of the Almighty, although, like David, they may be debarred from sharing in the felicity! I hope I am addressing myself to some in the family who know the value of the communion of saints. In the house of your God you sate under the Ministry of the Gospel with ineffable delight; in prayer, your soul drew near the Lord, and his praises resounded from every lip, while the fire of brotherly love glowed from soul to soul! But Providence has interrupted those sweet days, and now you mourn a silent Sabbath. Not like the slothful, worldly-minded professor of religion, who only attends the public duties of the Gospel when suiting his carnal disposition or his interest; not like such an one; your soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Lord's courts; and your heart crieth out for the living God. Your interruption, therefore, is not of choice, but necessity. Be submissive; for if God actually deprives you of the *means*, he can make up the loss in the more private communication of himself.

2. I shall now name some of the causes which frequently produce our silent Sabbaths. The loss of **MINISTERS**,

whose province it is to conduct the worship of the congregation. This sometimes is occasioned by their lawful removal to another part, where an opening is made for their greater usefulness. Ministers are subject to bodily infirmities and disease as other men, and thereby are liable to be laid aside from their public duty, and cause their people to experience a silent Sabbath. Ministers too, are mortal, and frequently are caught away by death in the midst of their usefulness, and leave their people to mourn the loss of public privileges. And now and then, Ministers, by temptation, and by error, are seduced; wound the cause of Christ, and produce among their people a gloomy Sabbath indeed! The loss of a Minister in this way is of more serious consequences, and more to be lamented than many deaths!—DOMESTIC AFFLICTIONS frequently deprive us of an attendance on the public duties of religion. Severe losses, disobedience and unfaithfulness of servants and children, extreme sickness in dear connections, and sometimes the entrance of death into our houses: these afflictions absorb the mind, and unstring the golden harp of praise. The Lord's day, under such calamities, heavily passes away; little else but sighs and tears are experienced. PERSONAL AFFLICTIONS must also be named. Confinement in the chamber, or wrecked on a sick bed, has a natural tendency to create a gloomy day. In this, as in every other case named in this Lecture, satan, our grand adversary, takes every possible advantage of a secluded state. Indeed, we may say; that silent Sabbaths are some of the devil's best holidays; in which he fails not to make sport with the feelings of those who are confined under the pressure of suffering. While I recite these things as peculiar to Christians in common, I will, in this place,



say, that there are circumstances in the silent Sabbaths of MINISTERS which sometimes produce exquisite pain. Now and then we may meet with a public servant of the Lord, who has been so highly indulged by his Master, as in a long life not to have met with any interruption from his stated delightful work, till called to recline on his dying bed. Such an one has not known the gloom and the pain of a silent Sabbath. Yet the number of such is certainly very small in comparison with others. May such favoured men possess gratitude and zeal proportionate to their mercy !

3. I shall now proceed to offer you a few directions, which, if pursued, will tend to alleviate your mind under your present distance from public worship. It will certainly be of use for you to reflect, that your absence from public worship is not by *choice*, but *necessity* ; therefore, it does not become your sin of wilful neglect. If you are conscious that the providence of God hath debarred you from external privileges, indulge reflection upon the *cause*, so far as to produce resignation to your heavenly Father's will ; particularly so if you experience family affliction.—If called to attend a sick or dying relative, you must remember, God intends your affliction to be to you a sermon from which you ought to derive many valuable lessons. Painful as it may be to spend a silent Sabbath over a sick child or valuable friend, if rightly improved, it may be to you of great advantage ; and, should the affliction particularly rest upon your own person, and yourself be confined to a sick bed, it certainly becomes you, with Job, to inquire of the Lord, *wherefore he contendeth with you ?* For, in all the afflictive dispensations of God, there are valuable designs. They often show us more of ourselves, and lead us sensi-



bly to the Lord for faith, patience, humility, and other valuable virtues, which are little known in ease and prosperity. Thus, like David, *commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.*—The advantages of MEDITATION to a person confined from the house of God, are exceedingly great. Christians have the most sublime objects for their attention, which are calculated to yield the most sublime pleasures. *While I mused,* said David, *the fire kindled.* And frequently, although the mind may be under extreme depression, by meditation on Christ, his love, his dispensations, light and joy break into the disconsolate breast.—PRAYER is both a duty and a privilege to Christians, at all times. Communion with God is the substance of religion. As certainly as the magnet is directed to the north, so grace, in whatever breast it may reside, cannot be satisfied with any thing short of Christ. Fellowship with God is the same, let the medium, duty, or ordinance, public or private, through which it may be enjoyed, be what it may. When confined in your chamber; or absorbed in personal or family sufferings, prayer becomes more necessary in order to support and to relieve you. Indeed, nature, as well as revelation, teaches this lesson. And to which may be added, the experience of Christians has ever evinced, that their sufferings have had an influence to lead them to the sensible enjoyment of God, to which they were too great strangers in times of prosperity. If, therefore, your silent Sabbath leads you to converse more freely with the Lord of the Sabbath and your own heart, you have reason for gratitude. God, though he has appointed public means, on which it is our duty to attend, nevertheless does not confine his gracious communications to them. He can hear your prayer, shine upon your heart,

and enrich you with grace in your family, as well as in the church, when he is pleased to confine you at home. Thus the silent Sabbath has its duties and advantages as well as public ones, and has made many a Christian to say,

O solitude ! thou friend to roving thought,  
Time's best interpreter, with wisdom fraught ;  
With my own mind conversing calm and free,  
I find Society enough in thee.  
Thy stilness helps my mem'ry to retrace  
Past joys ; to recollect the time, the place,  
Where once my favour'd hours serenely flow'd,  
And blest experience led my soul to God.

The silent Sabbath of MINISTERS, however in some instances painful, has very important duties. This will be a proper season for examination of the heart ; and, if confined by sickness, to exercise that *faith* and *patience* which they have preached to others. St. John was *in the Spirit on the Lord's day* ; but it was when an exile in the Isle of Patmos. There the Lord gave him the most animating views of Jesus, and unfolded to him the most interesting subjects. Silent Sabbaths, therefore, to Ministers are frequently attended with new discoveries of the Lord : it is a time to trim their lamps, that they may appear the brighter when again called to their public duty. At any rate, Ministers, when laid by from their usual work, should remember that their Lord knows best when to employ them ; and if he has no need of their present service, they certainly ought to employ their retirement to preach to themselves, and thus they will most assuredly preach the better to others.

I shall conclude by directing you, whether ministers or others, in your silent Sabbaths to reflect on that happy Sabbath in reserve for you in glory, where no silence reigns, but incessant praise shall employ your heart and tongue ! There you shall unite with the general assembly of the redeemed, and again embrace those happy pious friends with whom you once enjoyed the sweets of Christian love in the Church and family below. Then you shall breathe in heavenly air ; no tempest shall rage, nor vile temptations distract your soul. Joy, peace, love, and holy rapture, without the shadow of imperfection, shall be your happy portion. Your Saviour, though once bleeding on the cross, you will behold upon his brilliant throne, while his sacred smiles shall absorb your soul in unutterable bliss ! With such prospects may we spend our Sabbaths on earth, improve every vicissitude of time, and eventually share in that *rest which remains for the people of God.*

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## LECTURE XXVII.

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### *THE BEING OF GOD.*

PSALM lviii. 11.

*Verily there is a God.*

Great God, my Maker, and my King,  
Of thee I'll speak, of thee I'll sing;  
All thou hast done, and all thou dost  
Declare thee good, proclaim thee just.

*Bedome.*

THE knowledge of the being of a God is the first principle of religion. It is with no small degree of satisfaction that I select this subject for your attention. For, it is not only our duty, frequently to collect the evidences of the divine existence, which cannot fail to solemnize our minds; but that our families, children, and domestics may be taught this most necessary and important subject. Indeed, there are certain seasons of atheistical despondency incident to the Christian mind, which render a discourse of this kind truly desirable. It is far from my intention to enter upon a metaphysical chain of thought; but to collect the most familiar evidences, and render them to you as plain as possible, that the weakest capacity may be instructed, while the established believer may be gratified.

Notwithstanding the diversity of opinions upon the infinite number of objects and subjects with which mankind are conversant, there is no one in which the whole mass are united, but that there is a God. We live at a period which gives us the advantage of a general history of man-

kind, and particularly of those heathen nations which have recently been discovered. Gross as the darkness may be which covers those uncultivated mortals, there prevails universally among them, a persuasion that there exists a Being to whom mankind are accountable. Though, were we to select the various accounts of the depravity which accompany their belief, and the ways in which they express it, it would fill us with horror. The generality of mankind acknowledge that there is a Supreme Being, notwithstanding their diversity of opinions concerning his mode of existence, attributes, and works; and this is quite sufficient to create in our minds the certainty of the fact, *verily there is a God*. Suppose we next make a short investigation of some of the more visible parts of our world, and with which our senses are conversant.—If we lift our eyes and behold the heavens, the sun, the moon, the planets, the stars; the regularity of their order, their intrinsic magnificence, and their utility to mankind; surely they will teach us there was a first cause which produced their existence, and must still preserve them in their motions.—Survey the earth with its vast contents. Whence those mighty waters? Who swells their bosom, and fills them with rage, which dismays the heart of the stoutest mariner? Whence the innumerable variety of its finny inhabitants? Do they or their element move by chance? What arm is sufficient to still the foaming billows, or to stem the rolling tide? Surely there is a God who formed the great deep, and who displays his awful presence there!—Let vegetable creation lend their aid. Who giveth life and vegetation to trees, plants, and flowers? Who implanted their various virtues, and enriched them with nutritive qualities to nourish man and beast? The stately oak, the towering pine, and the hum-



ble hyssop, equally proclaim the wisdom of that God who giveth to every seed its own body.—Animal creation likewise affords a thousand evidences, in different forms, to impress the mind that there is a God. How vast their number! What beasts of prey, and beasts for the service of men! The winged tribe, if possible, more numerous still! The lion in the forest, and the bird on the bush, equally defy the art of man. Were it possible to form the beautiful plumage of the one, or the terrifying features of the other, still, who can convey life, inspire with strength and courage, and cause the winged creature to form its notes? It is all of God, and man must be silent and adore.—Revolving seasons, and the various events of time which take place unforeseen and unaided by mortals, are equally calculated to assist us in our present inquiry. We have our light and our darkness, summer and winter, seed time and harvest. These are absolutely determined; and the barrenness and the fruitfulness of either, notwithstanding the anxiety of mortals frequently to reverse them, demonstrate the being and the sovereignty of God.—To which may be added, the revolutions which attend countries, cities, families, and individuals, contrary to human fore-sight. These events, which daily occur, are of themselves sufficient to convince us, were we to pay the necessary attention, that there is a God.—The structure of the human body, with its vital machinery, are evident demonstrations of the being of God. The exquisite formation and variety of the bones, and the cartilages by which those bones are connected; the muscles, and the tendons in which those muscles terminate; the arteries by which the blood is conveyed from the heart to all parts of the body; and the veins, which are the same canals inverted, by which the blood is brought back to

the heart again; the powers of digestion, chylication, and the circulation of the blood;—these cannot fail to claim your admiration, and confirm your belief in an infinitely wise and Almighty Creator.—Wonderful as the human body may be, the soul infinitely exceeds it! The mind, possessed of capacious powers to contemplate universal nature, and form ideas of objects—the judgment and power of reasoning, determining right and wrong. How strong the memory to retain the knowledge of events long passed! The affections, love, joy, hope, fear, together with the power of the will; these must necessarily lead us to see that man not only possesses a superior rank in this lower creation, but stands a witness that there is a God.—Let us go a step further, as it relates to man, and more immediately to ourselves. Let me ask, Why you feel a consciousness of doing wrong? Can habit acquire this sensibility? If this be urged, from whence came the first conviction of error? Depraved as mankind are, this consciousness, more or less, is common to all. And does not this conviction in your own breasts receive a material acuteness from a secret persuasion that you are accountable for your actions, and lead you involuntarily to anticipate futurity, and persuade you there is a God, to whom you are accountable? I presume there is no one of this family, young or old, but will as soon deny his own existence, as the justness of these remarks. And I may venture to add, these form an evidence of the being of a God inscribed on the tablet of your conscience, which you have more or less occasion to read every day of your lives.—The concluding remark I shall make, is, on the departure of mortals, by death, from this transitory state. As the love of life is common to all mankind, so is an abhorrence of dissolution by death. The mo-

March upon his throne, surrounded with his adulating courtiers, enjoying what in vulgar opinion may be denominated felicity, starts and fears to die on the approach of the *king of terrors* ! The beggar, too, on his bed of straw, is no less reluctant to resign his fleeting breath ; and were he possessed of ten thousand worlds, would barter the whole for a respite from the grave. Whence this abhorrence of dissolution ? What arm impels the blooming youth, the busy merchant, and the proud sovereign to quit their enchanting scenes, resign their breath, and lie down in the dust of death ? To this we reply in the language of our text, *Verily there is a God*, and to him all men must bow.

It will now be necessary for you to collect the remarks which I have made. The natural indelible impression on the mind of man, which produces a general consent that there is a God ; the celestial bodies ; vegetable and animal creation ; revolving seasons, and the various events among mankind ; the human body, and the capacious soul ; together with the departure of men from this to another state, generally against their will ; these are sufficient evidences, on which you have reason to believe that there is a God. Yet, infidelity is so entwined in the human heart, in its present degenerate state, that a frequent recital of the evidences of this great truth becomes absolutely necessary to raise the lapsed mind. It is not uncommon to meet with persons who object to the authenticity of the BIBLE, who are equally deficient in the knowledge of the evidences of the DIVINE BEING, which is the first principle of universal nature. I cannot but remind you, that, except the text, which I have merely used as a motto to this lecture, I have not made any quotation from the Scripture, although greater evidence of

the existence of God, his attributes and government, are therein displayed in a more comprehensive and sublime manner, than can be found in any other writing.

Convinced that there is a God, and that man is a rational, accountable creature, it is highly proper, as a necessary improvement of this discourse, to indulge a few serious reflections. Since the general persuasion of the divine existence prevails among mankind, how is it there are such numberless erroneous opinions concerning his perfections? As a conviction of guilt in the human breast is almost as common as the belief that there is a God, how can man be happy while in a state of rebellion against his Maker? If we are transgressors against God, how can our crimes be pardoned; and the fountain of our vile nature be changed so that our views of God may be correct, and our happiness be secured? In all ages men of various descriptions have attempted more or less to answer such important questions; and by maxims of philosophy have lent their aid to cultivate mankind. But the evil still exists. None of those rules have been sufficient to inform us, if God can or will pardon transgressors! And, if this solemn point be not determined, it is impossible we can be truly happy, or die in peace. Let me ask you what impression these reflections make upon your mind? If you receive them aright, they will teach you the absolute necessity of God's making a NEW REVELATION of his mind and will in your favour. And it is with joy and confidence I assure you, that the book we call the BIBLE contains an adequate REVELATION to answer the important purposes of his glory and the salvation of sinners. To show you the evidences of the AUTHENTICITY of the BIBLE, will be the subject of my next Lecture.



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## LECTURE XXVIII.

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### THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE.

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2 PETER i. 16.

*We have not followed cunningly-devised fables.*

The works of man inherit, as is just,  
Their author's frailty, and return to dust;  
But *Truth Divine* for ever stands secure,  
Its head as guarded, as its base is sure;  
Fix'd in the rolling flood of endless years,  
The pillar of th' eternal plan appears;  
The raving storm, and dashing wave defies,  
Rais'd by that *Architect* who built the skies.

*Couper.*

IT may be presumed, from the words of our text, that there were persons in the early age of Christianity, who insinuated, the disciples of Jesus followed fables purposely to delude the unwary. So far from this being the case, Peter asserts that himself, with others, were eye witnesses of the glory of the Lord. The number of the disciples of Christ was great; they had the Old Testament writings in their hands; and had every desirable means of information for their own conviction and the benefit of others.

Closing my last Lecture, which was on the BEING OF GOD, we made some reflections by which you could not but perceive the absolute necessity of God's making a *new* revelation of himself, so as to give us, as sinners, hope of endless bliss. Agreeably to my promise, I shall now lay before you a few plain evidences, that the Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, comprises the necessary revelation of God to men, for the purposes of dis-



playing his attributes and saving sinners. A subject so nearly connected with your most important interest, I presume will not fail to claim your attention; and I hope will prove so far beneficial, as to convince you that in a profession of Christianity you have not followed *cunningly-devised fables*.

1. Let us examine the PERSONS who wrote the Bible. These were not a set of men of one language, in one country, and united for the purpose of composing a volume cunningly devised, to delude mankind, or to promote their own temporal interest. On the contrary, they lived in different countries, were of different languages, unknown to each other, and existed in various ages through a course of several thousand years; yet their sentiments perfectly agree, they recite the same historical facts, and invariably point to MESSIAH as the great Personage in whom a guilty race should be saved. None of those marks which are essential to hypocrisy or to imposture are found upon them. They discountenanced vice, and practised virtue. They sought not the applause of men, nor worldly wealth and honour; but exposed themselves to poverty, reproach, and death. What is very remarkable, those persons uniformly confessed their dependence upon God, lived a life of devotion and prayer, and in all that they wrote, in the most solemn manner asserted, *Thus saith the Lord*. Will you suppose such a set of men capable of imposition? Are there any marks of deception upon their writings? There are none. Have not the writers of the Bible given more rational sentiments of the perfections and works of the Almighty, and a more correct view of man in his state and diversified circumstances, than are to be found in all other writings? I am disposed to go a step further,

Have the opposers of the Bible exhibited better characters than those who wrote it? While they decry that volume, and attempt to prejudice the unwary, have they put a volume in our hands more moral, instructive, and calculated to relieve the woes of sinful men? They certainly have not. I am therefore compelled to venerate the characters of the sacred penmen. And I am likewise obliged to acknowledge that none but a set of men, raised up by the Almighty, would have been competent to the task, and persevered in a life of virtue, amidst such a multiplicity of opposition.

2. I shall now claim your attention to some of those peculiar SUBJECTS which distinguish the Bible from every other volume presented to mankind. Here we find the most ample description of human characters, and a discovery of the fountain of their depravity. It exhibits the law of our Creator in its purity, and finds mankind under its curse, through transgression. It displays an adequate redemption by the merits of *Messiah*, with a total exclusion of all moral fitness to obtain, or to receive the favour of God. It asserts the author of our redemption to be *God* and *man* united in one person, and that the completion of that redemption, and every truth in the Bible, centered in his death and resurrection. It discovers a way in which the fountain of iniquity in the heart of man can be changed; and enjoins the practice of the most sublime virtues, unknown in the schools of philosophy. God is revealed to sinners as the *God of all grace*. It provides an antidote against the sting of death, and hath brought life and immortality to light. These are a few of those subjects which distinguish the Bible from all other writings; and these are the very subjects which are of the highest consequence to sinners: and it

is equally observable, that none but sensible sinners cordially received those distinguishing truths to their hearts. From whence could such peculiar sentiments proceed? Not from men unassisted, for they are not only beyond the reach of human minds to have devised, but are contradictory to our carnal conceptions, and are extremely mortifying to our pride. I must, therefore, consider the peculiar sentiments of the Bible, as a weighty argument in favour of its authenticity; and instead of its being a cunningly-devised fable, believe that *holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

3. Whoever reads the Bible, must perceive that it contains many PROPHETIC DECLARATIONS; which, if fulfilled in their time and manner, must afford you another evidence that this book is not a cunningly-devised fable. The knowledge of future events is confessedly known only to God, and to those to whom he shall reveal them. We find prophecies concerning Egypt, Ninevah, Babylon, and the Hebrews, which, with the history of their certain accomplishment, leave no room to doubt of their being under the administration of God; and that those who declared the prophecies were inspired by him. The great portion of prophecies were directed to the appearance, work, and benefits of *Messiah*; that he should come before the Jewish government and the second temple were destroyed; that he should be born of a virgin of the tribe of Judah and the seed of David; particularly that he should die a violent death, bring in everlasting righteousness, and make his soul an offering for sin. All which have been minutely fulfilled in the coming of Jesus Christ, and in no other person. To which also I may add the predictions made by Jesus himself, concerning the future conduct of his disciples, and of Judas

in particular; his own sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven; the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the success of his spiritual kingdom through successive ages in the world, notwithstanding every opposition. Not to know that those predictions were fulfilled, is to be totally ignorant of the Bible, the history of nations, the present state of the Jews, and of the Christian Church, which is spreading far and wide over the whole earth. So far, therefore, my fellow Christians, from your having followed cunningly-devised fables, the Bible contains the councils of Jehovah, to which he has borne the most indisputable testimony, by their minute and certain accomplishment in the face of the whole world.

4. The MORAL CHANGE which the truths of the Bible has produced in the minds and conduct of sinful men is a great evidence of its authenticity. Indeed, very few of the opposers of Revelation but what readily admit the justness of this remark. Men, devoted to intemperance, cruel, profligate, ungodly, have been so changed in their hearts and lives, as to become virtuous and useful members of society. Many who were enveloped in error, sensuality, and idolatry, were turned from dumb idols to serve the living and true God. Nor was this changing influence confined to the early ages of Christianity. There is no age, no clime, no place where the Gospel has been faithfully preached, but what it has proved *the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believed*. Every sinner, converted from the error of his way to virtue and truth, is a living witness of the authenticity of the Bible. I will also add, the utility and sufficiency of the scripture *precepts* to direct, in the paths of life, and the government of the heart; its *promises* to support,



and to reconcile under the numerous ills of life, and the holy consolation that millions have enjoyed in conflict with death; these produce abiding evidences that the Bible is of God. I want no further internal evidence of the authenticity of the Bible, than the lively picture which I find it to contain of my own heart in all its operations: it opens sources adequate to my various necessities, leads me to my God, and assures me of future immortality.

I might now proceed to show you the antiquity of the Bible; the history of its preservation; that although kings and emperors may have made an improper use of it, by blending a profession of it with civil powers, yet in itself disclaiming all alliance with worldly governments, it solicits not their aid for its preservation and progress. I might examine some of those extraordinary miracles which are recorded in it; each of which would form a still greater weight of evidence, that we have not followed cunningly-devised fables; but, the limits of our Lectures will not allow me to pursue them. Enough, I hope, has been said to afford this family some instruction upon a subject of such importance. In the list of evidences I should have named the MORAL CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST; an examination of which is of great weight to determine the virtue of his religion. But this pleasing part of the subject you recollect I have already attempted to explain in the twenty-third Lecture.

Let me now entreat you to make these evidences familiar with your mind. The faith of God is built on truth. Christianity has stood the test of its most violent opposers. Permit me to ask each of you, if you are solemnly conscious of your sinfulness and accountability to God? What expedients have you tried to produce peace



in your breasts? Until you are made to feel the dire effects of sin in your own persons, you never will properly estimate the blessings of Revelation. It is too often found, that men oppose the Bible, because they deny their own depravity, and are unwilling to live beneath the Scripture precepts. I sincerely wish you may know the virtue of the Gospel in your own experience, and live beneath its cheering influence through all the changes of your lives. Plead for the influence of the same Spirit who inspired the sacred writers to compose the volume, to open its truth to your hearts, and make them operative in your lives. Render unto God thanksgiving for the new Revelation of his will in Christ for saving sinners. What would have been the state of fallen men, if God had not arisen upon us by the light of his word! Testify your gratitude by living under the holy precepts of the Gospel, that you give no occasion to contradict your profession; and be assured that the word which has hitherto been a light unto your feet, and a lamp unto your paths, will conduct you safe to the end.

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## LECTURE XXIX.

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### CHRIST A PHYSICIAN.

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MATT. ix. 35.

*And Jesus went about all the Cities and Villages, healing every sickness, and every disease among the people.*

Physician of my sin-sick soul,  
To thee I bring my case;  
My raging malady controul,  
And heal me by thy grace.

Pity the anguish I endure,  
See how I mourn and pine;  
For never can I hope a cure  
From any hand but *thine*.

BY the history of Jesus Christ we are taught to revere him as a benevolent Physician to the bodies and the souls of men. It was long foretold, as characteristic of Messiah, that by his power *the eyes of the blind should see out of obscurity, and the ears of the deaf should be unstopped; the lame man should leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing*. This was both literally and morally accomplished by Jesus, the Physician of value, who went about the cities and villages healing every sickness and every disease among the people, by the word of his mouth. It is, however, evident, Jesus did not learn the medical art of man; whatever cures he performed, were by the exertion of that innate virtue, which, at his pleasure, he was able to communicate.

If there were no diseases, there could be no need of a physician; if man had not sinned, he would have known no sorrow. Soul and body are infected, and the natural

diseases of the one characterise the evils of the other. Not one of human nature exempt; *A seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord; they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores;* and, what adds to the misery of sinners, is, they are utterly insensible of their state, and reject relief. So true are the words of Jesus, *The whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.* Indeed, such is the stupifaction of the sinner, there is an absolute necessity for the exertion of the Physician's power to bring the subject to a state of sensibility. This is God's method. *I wound and I heal.* The Lord does not make every man feel alike the evils of his heart; yet, all are taught to know the evil and demerit of sin in such a degree as to be convinced they cannot heal themselves, and that Christ alone can make them whole.

These preliminary remarks on the moral state of man, were necessary to my naming the subject of this discourse. To present a physician to a man in health, would be an insult; but, to a person sensible of disease, it is an instance of friendship. Presuming you are made sensible of the nature, malignity, and demerit of sin; permit me to give you a few general outlines of the character of Jesus as the Physician of value; and, may he graciously perform his invaluable office, by granting you the healing balm, which shall infallibly effect your restoration.

1. No man can be deemed a physician unless he knows the nature, process, period, and consequences of disease; for this is indispensably necessary to the application of remedy. Jesus Christ *need not any one to testify what*

*was in man, for he knew what was in man.* His discourses on fallen humanity, may be deemed LECTURES ON THE ANATOMY OF THE SOUL. While ancient philosophers marked only the outward conduct, Jesus penetrates the heart, and discovers its most latent evils. In the sacred Scriptures, our great Physician has laid open the thoughts and the imaginations of the heart, the origin of its depravity, its operations, and its tendency, so that the enlightened mind may perceive its own likeness. Still more; Jesus, by the power of his Spirit, probes, if I may so say, the heart of a sinner, and makes him feel the nature and consequences of human guilt. 'Thus far is Jesus a competent Physician, and if you have been under his hand, he has convinced you that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. No light of science, no efforts of dim reason, could have produced this new discovery in your breast; the effect of which has led you to God, humbled your heart, made you justify the honours of the Lord in his law which condemns you to death, and creates in you a cry for an application of the healing balm of Jesus the all-sufficient Physician to save you.

2. For your consolation let me inform you, Jesus, the Physician for sinners, possesses the means for perfecting their cure. What then is that sovereign balm which effectually cures such multitudes in so wretched a state? It is his blood, his own most precious blood! *By his stripes we are healed.* Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth! the Physician dies to let the patient live! Here, weeping sinners, here in the Saviour's pierced heart, is the fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. This precious, this efficacious remedy for sinful



man was predetermined in the council of heaven, it was realized on mount Calvary, and it receives its virtue from the dignity of the Physician, who is *Emmanuel, God with us*. O for a believing heart to stand by the cross, contemplate our great Physician, bathed in sweat, in tears, and in blood ! Jesus knew the absolute necessity of fulfilling every demand of the transgressed law, in precept and in penalty ; equally so of expelling the poison of sin from our hearts, in order to our effectual cure. For this he suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God. Thousands of sinners of the deepest dye, have received this precious remedy of Emmanuel's blood, have been made happy in time, triumphant in death, and glorious in eternity.

3. On this subject we have farther to say, that the mere possession of medicine, however excellent, cannot avail ; it must be applied. It is with real joy that we assert, Jesus our Physician applies the healing balm to the wounded sinner's heart, in time, in quantity, and in continuance. To know Jesus to be *the* Physician of value is excellent ; but, to receive him as *our* Physician is infinitely better ! The application of his celestial medicine he performs only by his Spirit and his word. *He sent his word, and healed them*. As the spirit reveals the balm, the word of promise is our warrant to enjoy it as our own. No cure from Christ but in this way. Many professedly take the word, which, in itself, is only as the Physician's vial, which can be of no use to the patient without the cordial. It is the Spirit of God, *in* and *by* the Gospel, which conveys and applies the virtue of Christ to the soul of man. To this we have the joint testimony of primitive saints : *Now, said Paul, we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God,*



that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. When Jesus graciously designs the cure, every obstruction yields. The grossest darkness is expelled by the rays of his light; and the most hardened heart dissolves on an application of his precious blood. The vilest temptations, raging in the breast like the boisterous lake of Genesareth, subsides, when Jesus cries, *Peace, be still*. The man who habitually lived at a distance from God, is taught celestial breathing in holy prayer; an eager appetite, unknown before, is created after the bread of life; and lively animation is found in every faculty of the soul, to perform the commands of a gracious God. Happy are those who are the subjects of such distinguishing goodness! Raised from a bed of sickness, how charmingly we prize the blessing of health! and as David admirably expresses it, *our youth is renewed like the eagles*. Infinitely greater pleasure do those enjoy who are delivered from the mortal disease of sin, through the merciful loving kindness of Jesus the Redeemer and Physician of sinners! They cannot but feel his love, own his grace, and exclaim, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, and who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies*.

4. Of Jesus, the divine Physician, I have yet to say, he raises none but such as are incurable by man. The more desperate the case, the more welcome to his heart, and suitable to manifest his power. Saul of Tarsus, the Jailor, Mary Magdalene, the Thief upon the cross, and numberless other sinners of the deepest dye, evince this truth. This blessed Physician never leaves his patient; he loveth at all times, and hateth putting away. No case yet, or ever will fail in his hand. No

money nor price did Jesus ever take for the multitude of cures he performed ; but, at the same time, he never fails to secure the hand and the heart of his patients ; so that, with ardor they commend his worth and celebrate his praise ! His cures are radical. They who obtain mercy to believe in him, shall not die eternally. He most sweetly assures every one whom he heals, that he will in due time convey them to glory, where all tears shall be wiped from their eyes ; no more natural nor moral death shall pass upon either their bodies or their souls ; neither shall there be any more pain ; but the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, shall lead them unto fountains of living waters, and enjoy an eternity of bliss !

Here we might conclude our discourse, but it is of infinite importance for us to know, if Jesus be our Physician ? Certain it is, we must either perish under the painful disease of sin, or be indebted to the healing balm of the Redeemer's blood. Although sinful, diseased mankind may justly be said to occupy the world as one vast HOSPITAL, yet how few are found in IMMANUEL'S WARD ! Should you feel the hidden evils of your heart, and earnestly implore the visit of our gracious Physician, you have every encouragement in your favour. Your case, however obstinate, is not too hard for the Lord. The many cures left on record in the Scriptures, which he performed on the deaf, the dumb, the lame, the blind, the distracted demoniac, the loathsome leper, the long-standing infirmity ; all these, while they proclaim the power of Jesus to heal to the very uttermost, affords you encouragement to plead his aid. Go, try his skill ; he never turns away the soul that knocks at Mercy's door.

I presume to hope, some now hear me who are wit-

nesses of the healing virtue of the Lord. You have little occasion for me to remind you of the debt of gratitude and love you owe to him. Remember, you have perpetual need of his care, while exposed to sin, temptation, and the sorrows of the world. Jesus can make your severest suffering prove as medicine to establish the health of your souls; and likewise bless those means which may be used for your recovery, when the body is cast on a bed of sickness. Take this Jesus, employ him as your **FAMILY PHYSICIAN**; and may you perpetually enjoy the cordials of his love, and await with confidence the period of your dismissal to the bliss of eternity!

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## LECTURE XXX.

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### *THE BURNING BRAND EXTRICATED.*

ZECH. iii. 2.

*Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*

With Satan, my accuser near,  
My spirit trembled when I saw  
The Lord in majesty appear,  
And heard the thunders of his law.

Now, Satan, thou hast lost thy aim,  
Against this brand thy threats are vain;  
Jesus has pluck'd it from the flame,  
And who shall put it in again?

*Newton.*

WHAT strong language is this, to describe the salvation of a sinner by the immediate arm of the Lord Redemer! It was applied to *Joshua the high priest*; but is equally true of all the patriarchs, prophets, ministers, and people of God, who, by nature, as burning brands, experience the power of God in their deliverance, and then are prepared to serve and honour their adored Deliverer. While, therefore, I shall attempt to explain this interesting passage of Scripture, may God vouchsafe to accompany our efforts with his blessing.

1. Our attention is first called to reflect on that well known element which constitutes the most material figure in the text. FIRE is a Scripture emblem of the anger of an holy and just God. *Thus saith the Lord, A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell. Our God is a consuming fire.* It is solemnly declared, *His hand shall find out all his enemies, and shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of his anger.* The perpetuity of this fire our Lord hath declared, by its being

*unquenchable, and enduring for ever and ever.* What a fearful thing is it to fall into the hand of the living God! Here it may be asked, "How can this awful description consist with the character of the ever blessed God? Can his wrath burn like fire against the creatures he hath formed?" It is just. The cause of his indignation is *sin*. We have transgressed his holy, just, and good law. Therefore it is said, *Before him went a fiery law.* When God appeared to Moses on the mount, to deliver to him the two tables of the law, it was in awful fire, smoke, thunder, and lightning. Awful indeed! Were it not that sin is as hardening as it is polluting, these solemn truths would make the most abandoned sinner's heart tremble!

2. We next cast our eye on the sinner in his sins, the brand burning in the fire. A BRAND is a piece of wood, or branch of a tree, which once possessed the powers of vegetable life. It is therefore a fit emblem of man, who, by union with Adam, our first parent and representative, possessed the excellence of moral life. But, by sin the human race are cut down, and each individual by nature and by practice are justly deserving the wrath of God, and are as brands in the midst of the burning. *By sin came death*, in all its possible forms. *By one man's disobedience many were made sinners.* This is the source of human crime, and every conscious breast must feel a fountain of corruption within itself, impelling to every act of disobedience. The justice of God cannot but pursue the transgressors of his law; and the Almighty hath declared, *Wickedness burneth as the fire; it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest; and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke.* *Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel*



*of the fire.* This is a subject which should create in each of us the most solemn sensibility. If we observe human nature as under the special eye of God in this life, we shall find that sin and punishment are companions. Sinful man, like a brand in the fire, is consuming his time in vanity, and his mental powers in folly. But there are sins of intemperance, with others of too vile a nature to be named, which have a direct tendency, gradually to consume the body and destroy the soul of both young and old. Such persons consume so fast, that, according to David, *they live not out half their days.* Alas! how many parents and families have felt the severity of disobedience and wickedness in their near connections, and have witnessed their ruin by following them to an untimely grave! I could pursue this subject further, and by the aid of God's unerring word, realize their still more awful state; but enough I hope has been said to awaken your attention, and aid your consciousness of the direful effects of sinning against so good and holy a God. However, justice to my subject, as well as matter of fact, lead me to review my text, and

3. To show you a very affecting instance of the sinner's state. See, the brand lies dormant in the fire, burning and consuming, without power to extricate itself! Just so is sinful man; insensible of guilt, and without inclination or ability to change his unhappy state. Proud nature may arise and attempt to contradict this fact, but it is too positive to be denied. How strongly is this truth declared by Isaiah! *Let favour be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see.* This is a just description of

the will and ability of fallen nature; and, to such as are disposed to dispute it, I will only say, if man has power to repel the force of his corrupt propensities, and deliver himself from the demerit of his offences, why does he not accomplish it? Why not escape from the awful burning? Why let practice so glaringly contradict avowed sentiment? But such declamation of thoughtless sinners does but prove more forcibly the impossibility of man to save himself; or, as a brand, to escape from the burning flame. What then shall we do? Glory be to the riches of mercy! that which is impossible with man, is possible with God. This leads me, with great pleasure, to review my text again, and

4. To explain to you the conversion of a sinner as a brand plucked from the fire. The AGENT in this great work is Jesus, the Son of God. *We are delivered from wrath through him. There is none other name by whom we can be saved, but by the name of Jesus Christ.* His ability to pluck a sinner as a brand from the burning, not only arises from the divinity of his Person, but from his having paid down to justice the price of his infinitely precious blood, as the ransom of his people. I may, therefore, with confidence say, Jesus having purchased his people, who, by nature, are children of wrath, even as others, has a legal right to deliver them from their wretchedness, and pluck them as brands from the burning. Glory be to this Almighty Saviour for the plenitude of his redemption, and for the exertions of his converting grace!—To *pluck* is a word which expresses an instantaneous exertion, implying danger in the sinner who is rescued from destruction, and power and good will in the blessed Saviour. It equally signifies a change of place and state. The sinner is delivered from the ha-

bit, the love, and the practice of sin ; from beneath the curse of the law, and his desert of the fire of hell ; for the purpose of enjoying the pardon, peace, and felicity of faith, in the Lord Jesus. Of such deliverances, how many are recorded in the Bible? You will instantly recollect *Mary Magdalene*, the *Jailor*, and *Saul of Tarsus*. Nor can you omit the singular instance of the *Thief* upon the cross, who, evidently, was a brand plucked from the fire. Happy will it be for you if your breast can witness so great a deliverance for yourselves ; each advancing as a testimony of the power and love of Jesus, exclaiming with sacred ardour, “ Jesus hath plucked me as a brand from the burning.” If so, you can, with sensibility, accompany me in a

5. Lesson of instruction which our text can afford. A brand extricated from the fire, is yet flaming and smoking. This is perfectly consonant to the sensibility of a converted sinner. He yet feels the power and guilt of sin. His mind is conscious of extreme ignorance of God, Christ, and eternity ; and is, if I may so say, covered as with the smoke of hell. Saul of Tarsus was no sooner plucked as a brand from the burning of his persecution and guilt, than he cried, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Peter exclaimed on his conversion, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord*. Every one called by grace knows and feels the wretched state to which sin reduced them ; they are taught to lament the many years they had been consuming their time, their bodies, and their souls in a course of iniquity. Their great inquiry is, How shall a sinner, as a burning, smoking brand, be quenched ; and the guilty conscience possess pardon and peace with God? Let me hope this sensibility is possessed by some of you. I assure you, until you feel yourselves

guilty, and your conscience as a burning, smoking brand, you will not cry to God for relief. It is contrary to the proud unbelieving state of fallen nature. To possess a just sensibility of our true character as sinners, must be created by the Lord; and whoever is a subject of this merciful change, will most ardently seek to be informed how a burning, guilty conscience can be quenched. In hope you are amongst the number of such inquirers, I shall cheerfully inform you;

6. The way in which the burning brand is quenched is in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. Glory be to the Son of God, whose blood cleanseth from all sin! That atoning blood which satisfied justice, may well put out the fire of guilt in your conscience. Come then, guilty sinners, whose case is as distressing as it is dangerous, come to the bleeding Prince of life. See! from his hands, his feet, his head, his heart, flows blood to wash away your stains. Make no vain excuse—let not unbelief prevail—nature cannot relieve you—no water can quench and heal your guilty soul. What greater encouragement can you wish than the invitation which Jesus himself has given? *Him that cometh unto me I will in no ways cast out.*

7. I have now to ask some interesting questions. What becomes of the quenched brand? May it again fall into the flames of wrath, and be utterly consumed? Can a coal-burnt brand be appropriated to use? Is it possible it should ever bud, blossom, be covered with foliage, and bear delicious fruit? From the course of nature we should readily reply, impossible! But to this we triumphantly assert, that which is impossible with man, is possible with God. It is the work of God that sinners, plucked as brands from the burning, are united to Christ,



the true and living vine, and from him derive that vital influence which enables them to bear rich fruit to God. This made Paul congratulate the converts of his day ;— *God be thanked, though ye were the servants of sin, you are now made the servants of God ; have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.* converse with the children of grace ; and they will tell you, they were brands plucked from the burning ; and with hearts of gratitude will point you to Jesus, the living vine, as the source of all their hope, their holiness, and joy !

8. Glancing again at my text, I perceive a very solemn conclusion may be drawn from it. One brand plucked from the fire leaves others in the flames. Could we properly feel the force of this remark, what solemn sensibility would it create ! How often do we find this truth verified where the Gospel is preached ? One person in a pew, snatched as a brand from the burning, while the rest of his company are left in insensibility. Equally so in families ; one is taken, another left. May each of you be assisted to determine this interesting point for yourselves.

After having advanced these sentiments, I am obliged to detain you a moment longer, to examine the form of our text. It is a question proposed. In the case of Joshua, it was made by Christ to the Devil. *The Lord rebuke thee, Satan.* Satan tempts to sin, while the sinner is burning as a brand in his iniquities ; and blows, if I may so say, the fire of corruption to make it burn the stronger, intending, eventually, to destroy both body and soul in hell. But Jesus, in the riches of his mercy, and the greatness of his power, rescues the sinner from the destruction of Satan ; and then addresses the infernal, *Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire ?* Thus Jesus dis-



plays the conquest of his grace, and Satan is summoned as a witness of the fact.—The language of the text is frequently repeated by the Ministers and Church of God, when converts appear for fellowship with the saints, and declare the unbounded mercy of Jesus in snatching them from the jaws of destruction. Nor is it uncommon to find the language of the text on the lips of the convert himself, addressed to all, “Am I not a brand plucked from the fire?”—But, when all the ransomed of the Lord shall be brought to glory, Jesus, with inconceivable triumph, may appeal to all heaven, to witness the power of his grace in the salvation of sinners; each of them, without exception, as brands from the burning; and the whole ransomed throng shall sing the praises of God and the Lamb for ever and ever.

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## LECTURE XXXI.

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### THRONE OF GRACE.

HEB. iv. 16.

—*The Throne of Grace.*—

Though men and devils rage,  
And threaten to devour;  
The saints, from age to age,  
Are safe from all their pow'r;  
Fresh strength they gain to run their race,  
By waiting at the Throne of Grace.

*Newton.*

PERHAPS few sentences are found more familiar in the lips of Christians than this—A THRONE OF GRACE. The usual appropriation of the words is to express the great privilege of communion with God in prayer. And although the words do not occur in any other part of Scripture, the term used may be said to comprehend the sum and substance of all the invaluable privileges of the sons of God. As this subject is so interesting, I purpose to offer you a short description of the Throne of Grace;—point out the way in which God brings a sinner to that throne; and how it is the children of God are kept in the enjoyment of that privilege.

1. A throne is a magnificent seat of state for sovereigns and judges; from whence they form decrees, administer justice, give audience, and confer honours. God, in Scripture, is described as sitting upon a throne. However, to guard us against any improper ideas of his spirituality and immensity, he hath declared by Isaiah, *Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool.* The authority and dominion of God over mankind as his crea-

tures, cannot be disputed ; there is a witness of this fact in every rational mind. *The Lord shall endure for ever : he hath prepared his throne for judgment. He shall judge the world in righteousness ; he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.* For us, as transgressors, to be brought before this throne for judgment, what else but death in every conceivable form could be pronounced against us. Happy for us, there is a Throne of Grace ! This is a new throne, the production of infinite wisdom and everlasting love. On this throne is seated our EVERLASTING FATHER as *the God of all grace ;* JESUS, the Son of his love, through whom grace reigns, is *set down at his right hand* as our Redeemer and Intercessor. And, from the Father and the Son proceeds the HOLY SPIRIT, as *the Spirit of grace and of supplication.* On this august throne, mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other. The law from the throne of judgment demands the life of the sinner ; but Jesus, from this throne of grace, confers a pardon through the merit of his precious blood. Around this throne is the celestial *rainbow*, the pledge of mercy, and sure ground of promise to every coming sinner. From this gracious throne none were ever driven away. Here the vilest sinners, sensible of their crimes, have found abundant mercy ; the hardest hearts have been made to love ; and the most tempted, distressed minds, have found grace sufficient to help them in every time of need. This blessed throne was designed in the council of peace. The curtain, if I may so say, was drawn aside, and a sight of it granted to our first parents when the promise was revealed, that *the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head ;* by which they not only saw the Lord upon his throne as *Lord*

Creator, but as *Lord the Redeemer*, enjoying and worshipping him as such. The emblem of this throne of grace was erected by order of the Lord, in the *Holy of Holies*; for the service of the Hebrews. There the Lord rested, by the symbols of his presence, upon the mercy-seat of the Ark, and between the cherubims of glory. On the great day of atonement the High Priest entered with blood, and sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat, while the Lord communed with him, and commanded him to return and bless the thousands of Israel. The New Testament affords us ample information of the throne itself. As Paul, in his comment on the Hebrews' temple, said; *Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.* There Jesus sits and reigns, to conquer by his grace the purchase of his blood;—there he relieves the necessities of his people under all their sufferings, and prepares them to sit down with him on the throne of his glory. What a privilege then is it to have access to the throne of grace! The vail of the temple is now rent, and the throne is free for every coming sinner; yet, whoever found the way thither by the dictate of reason or of nature? Not one. He that erected the throne of grace must bring the distant sinner nigh. How the Lord performs this was to be the next division of our discourse.

2. The efficient cause of a sinner's coming to the throne of grace, is certainly *the Spirit of grace*: the instrumental cause is the *Gospel*. Thus saith the Lord to every one who hath found the way to the throne of grace, *I have loved thee, with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.* To come, to go, we understand to be the motion of a living, and not

a dead body. God, therefore, by his Spirit of grace, quickens those who are dead in trespasses and sin. Sensation and motion, which are the two attributes of life, are made manifest. This was evident in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. No sooner had the Lord arrested him on his way to Damascus, than light shone into his understanding; and his soul was so moved towards the throne of grace, that the Lord said unto Ananias, as a proof of Saul's conversion, *Behold he prayeth.* I said, the Spirit of God was the efficient cause of sinners being brought to the throne of grace. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; and, except a man be born of the Spirit he cannot see the kingdom of God.* I said also, the Gospel is the instrumental cause of sinners being brought to the throne of grace. The law, as such, proceeds from the throne of judgment; it worketh wrath, and fills the awakened mind with the most painful apprehensions of future woe. But the Gospel, read or preached under the power of the Spirit, informs sinners that there is a throne of grace; that the proclamation of Jesus upon that throne is, *Whosoever will, let him come, and him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out.* And, what is a matter of great moment to know, the same Spirit as *the Spirit of faith*, enables such convinced persons to believe the Gospel, put in their claim, and then to go in humble prayer to the throne. This, then, is God's work; and unless God had taken us by the hand and taught us to go, as he did Ephraim, none of us would have found the way to the throne of grace.

I shall beg your attention to the whole verse out of which I have selected the text. *Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* I simply read it



to claim your attention to two parts of it. *To obtain mercy*; this is the grand errand of all sensible sinners to the throne. But I beg you will consider the issue ;—*find mercy!* O how big with meaning is this expression! To hear of mercy is inviting ; but to *find mercy* ; to have it proclaimed in our consciences, and applied to our hearts ; what a treasure is this ! It means nothing less than, “ my soul is pardoned ; Christ is my friend ; God is my father ; the Spirit is my comforter ; and heaven shall be my final home ! ” O, while I pronounce these sentiments, may the God of all grace cause the riches of his mercy to flow into every heart !—The other part of the verse to which I refer you is, *To find grace to help in time of need.* This is precious, because there is no period but what is a time of need to us all. And it is our mercy that there is an ample sufficiency of grace in the fulness of Jesus, who sits upon the throne. Thus, under our common or extraordinary necessities, we may come boldly, and receive out of that fulness, grace for grace.

3. I shall now endeavour to explain to you how it is God keeps his believing children in nearness to the throne of grace.—This is performed by the continued influence of the same Spirit who brought you near at first. *No man can keep alive his own soul.* The water of which Jesus gives his people, he asserts to be, *in them a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.* It is owing to the gracious influence of this Spirit residing in your souls, that your desires and exercises of heart are kept towards the throne ; else you would inevitably apostatize. *All my springs are in thee,* said David ; and the longer you live, and the more you experience of God, the more you will be convinced of the perpetual aid of that blessed Spirit who is promised to help our infirmities. Never

loose sight of this truth. *Through Christ we have access unto the Father, by one Spirit.* Therefore, honour the Spirit as the source of your life from Christ, and the bond of communion with the Father on the throne of his grace. —I next inform you that God has appointed external means, or what I may call roads or path-ways, to the throne of grace. These are, the Scriptures, public prayer, preaching the Gospel, the positive ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, the communion of saints, not forgetting family worship. All these are enjoined upon believers as such; God having connected the means with the end, for the express purposes of our obedience, the exercise of spiritual life, and the glory of his own grace. And it has always been found, those persons who have either despised or neglected the means, have missed the end, and fell short of communion with God. On the other hand, those who observed the means, and had respect to all God's commands, found that in keeping of them there was great reward. One other mean by which God keeps his people near to his throne of grace, is the rod of affliction. By nature we are bent to backslide, leave the throne of grace, and depart into a thousand forbidden paths; therefore, *whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. In their affliction, saith the Lord, they will seek me early.* How many can witness the utility of affliction in leading them to the throne of grace! They unitedly declare with David, *Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy testimonies.*

Let me now intreat you to bear in mind, that the design of God's dealing with you is to lead you to his throne of grace. Never rest satisfied short of the enjoyment of this high privilege. Let the recollection of your past enjoyments at the throne second my admonition. You

know your happiness consists in fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Rest not in any duty or means of grace, but pass through them as the appointed ways to the throne. And, I may venture to assure you, that in proportion to your frequent sensible communion with Christ on his throne, will be the peace of your mind, the fruitfulness of your life at home and abroad, and the solidity of your confidence in believing that he who hath led you to the throne of grace will soon transmit you to the throne of his glory for ever !

I cannot allow myself to close without reflecting on the unhappiness and danger of a person being destitute of an access to the throne of grace. We are under *law* or under *grace* ; either beneath the burning throne of judgment bound over to death, or under the covert of Emmanuel's wings on the throne of grace. While we examine ourselves, may God help us to be faithful, meet with us in mercy, and lead us to his throne of grace ; there to obtain that mercy and grace which shall help in every time of need, and prepare us for the blissful regions of immortality !

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## LECTURE XXXII.

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### COMPARISON BETWEEN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST AND THE CONVERSION OF A SIN- NER.

ROM. vi. 5.

—*The likeness of his resurrection.*

What tho' once we perish'd all,  
Partners of our Parents' fall;  
Second life we now receive,  
In our heavenly Adam live.  
Hail the Lord of earth and heav'n!  
Praise to thee by both be giv'n!  
Thee we greet triumphant now,  
Hail! the Resurrection—*Thou.*

J. R.

THE Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is a fact against which the enemies of Christianity have levelled their most virulent artillery. No wonder, therefore, that with equal ardour, Christians employ themselves in the research of those positive and presumptive evidences on which this great fact is founded; and from thence draw their fortitude of soul and hope of immortality. *To know Jesus, and the power of his resurrection*, was the ardent wish of St. Paul. He did know them in a degree, but wished to penetrate them more deeply, and feel their efficacy more sensibly. Indeed, to know the power of the resurrection of Jesus, what it is in itself, as proving his character, evincing the completeness of his ransom, and destroying our enemies; to know and feel the power and influence of that resurrection upon the heart; and to be taught the exertion of that power upon the bodies of saints at the close of time; these enter very materially into the marrow of Christianity.

I purpose, in this discourse, to show you THE LIKENESS BETWEEN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS AND THE CONVERSION OF A SINNER.

1. JESUS was declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead. God hath fulfilled his promise, in that he hath raised up Jesus again, as it is written in the second Psalm, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* When Jesus entered public life, it was in the character of *the Son of God*; but the Jews denied him that claim, and charged him with blasphemy. Satan, in the wilderness, levelled all his temptation against the *sonship* of Jesus. And many of his followers frequently doubted of his character, and said unto him, *If thou be the Christ, the Son of God, tell us plainly.* But, when Jesus arose from the dead, it established his claim as THE SON OF GOD; and after his appearance to his disciples, their faith was sufficiently confirmed, and they were filled with exceeding great joy!—As with Jesus, so with converted sinners. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.* First risen with Christ, as Head and Redeemer, and then, by virtue of that secret union, his people are brought into a visible relation to him as the sons of God, by the regeneration of the same Spirit of holiness that raised him up from the dead. We may call ourselves the sons of God, be either esteemed or denied such by others; but unless we have experienced *the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ*, by the regeneration of our souls, our claim to the character is vain. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying,



Abba, Father. See, therefore, the connection, and the analogy, between the resurrection of Jesus and our regeneration. As Christ was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification ; so, we can have no greater evidence of interest in him, than by being raised by grace from a state of moral death and corruption, to walk in newness of life.

2. Jesus said, *I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again.*—He did lay down his life, attended with tears, with sorrow, and with blood, as the ransom of his flock ; but, when he took it up again, though essentially the same life, it was freed from every possible degree of anguish ; he wept no more ; *for in that he died, he died unto sin once ; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.* The risen Jesus now declares, *I am he that liveth, and was dead ; and behold, I am alive for evermore.* Jesus is now made a PRIEST for ever, after the power of an *endless life* ; and ever lives to make intercession for us.—In this instance also, we trace the likeness of his resurrection, to the conversion of a sinner. Christ is our life ; our life is hid with Christ in God. His new and glorified life is communicated to his members. Because I live, ye shall live also. With this life, whoever hath it, like the risen Jesus, *they live unto God* ; and as the life of Jesus, so the new and spiritual life of his people shall never see death. *I am the resurrection and the life*, saith the Lord ; *he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.* With what satisfaction and gratitude should Christians look on their new life ! and what strong consolation must this afford in prospect of the grave !

3. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead was

his first step to the mansions of bliss. And, certain it is, the conversion of a sinner is his first step to the mansions of glory. *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* But those who are born again shall surely see the kingdom of God. It is indeed their first step. While lying in the grave of iniquity, there can be no hope; but when the soul, dead in trespasses and in sin, is quickened by Christ, and the stony heart, like the door of his sepulchre, is in any way removed, the actions of spiritual life are produced, and liberty, unknown before, is most charmingly enjoyed! *The Lord giveth grace and glory.* There is an inseparable connection between these two gifts. He that bestows regenerating, sanctifying life upon a sinner, as the fruit of grace, will eventually crown that life with glory. Jesus is our fore-runner. As sure as he took his first step from the grave, and then ascended up on high, crowned with glory and majesty, so assuredly shall the living members of his spiritual body unite with him their Head, and be glorified together. For this he incessantly prays, and this shall certainly be accomplished. *Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, to behold my glory.* Can Jesus plead in vain? Impossible! Let us then rejoice in in hope of the glory of God.

4. The last view we shall take between the likeness of the resurrection of Jesus, and the conversion of a sinner, is the assemblage of the DIVINE ATTRIBUTES in producing them. *Christ was raised up by the glory of his Father.* Not so much by the attendance of the bright Angels who were sent to witness the resurrection of Jesus, as the display of the divine perfections in that glorious event. The WISDOM of God in devising the plan of redemption; his OMNIPOTENCE in raising Jesus from

the dead, when he personated his numberless people, and bore their still more numerous transgressions; his FAITHFULNESS in accomplishing the many prophecies and promises made unto the fathers in various ages concerning the incarnation, death, and resurrection of his Son; his JUSTICE, receiving from Christ, our adored surety, complete satisfaction to his law, in precept and penalty; and, with these, his MERCY and his LOVE, shine with more radiant lustre than the meridian sun in its brightness! The application of these attributes is made to the conversion of sinners. *As Christ was raised up by the glory of the Father, so we also walk in newness of life.* Paul wished the Ephesians to know, *what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.* The same power of Jehovah which raised Jesus from the sepulchre, is not only necessary, but is evidently exerted in raising a sinner from the grave of iniquity, by regeneration and conversion. And, however easy some may imagine it to *believe*, to the saving of the soul, we learn from the above quoted text, that the faith of God is wrought in the soul, and supported by the exceeding greatness of his power. This is the grand reason why *he that believeth shall be saved.* Paul being raised by the power of God, from a state of ignorance, carnality, and implacable enmity, to a life of obedience, zeal, and honour in the cause of Emmanuel, gave this testimony concerning the temper of the disciples towards him; *they glorified God in me.* The wisdom, goodness, mercy, power, and love of God, manifest in the resurrection of Jesus, was proportionably displayed in the conversion of Paul; and is likewise displayed in the regeneration of every sinner in every age.

You may now perceive the analogy between the resurrection of Jesus and the conversion of sinners. Their *sonship* is declared; their *spiritual life is enjoyed*; it is their *first step to glory*, and the whole displays the grandeur of God.

From the nature of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; as also its parallel with the death of a believer to sin, and his rising to a life of righteousness, by the power of regenerating grace; Paul, in this chapter, takes occasion to show the design of BAPTISM. This institution is a mirror, in which those subjects on which we have now treated are admirably illustrated; and when a person is baptized in faith, he beholds the fitness of that ordinance to realize his hope in his Saviour's death and resurrection, and his personal interest in the power of his resurrection; and from thence devotes himself to the honour of God.

Let us now inquire into our personal interest in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. What evidence have we that we have passed from death unto life? If so we have, we certainly live to God in newness of life, and know that that life we once did not possess; that it comes from a risen Saviour, and is connected with hopes, privileges, duties, and joys unknown to us before. From the death and resurrection of the Son of God, all your salvation must flow. *If you, therefore, be risen with Christ, may you set your affections on things above.* Remember, every aspiration of the soul to heaven, every longing to be dissolved and to be with Christ, is the fruit of his resurrection upon you. May your conversation be more abundantly in heaven! And, while on earth, may you bear the fruit of the resurrection of Jesus in your temper and conduct, and look forward, with joy, to the hour of death, and to the day of judgment.



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## LECTURE XXXIII.

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### CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

PSALM xxiii. 1.

*The Lord is my Shepherd.*

Tell me, fairest of thy kind,  
Tell me, *Shepherd*, all divine,  
Where this fainting head reclined  
May be relieved from cares like mine:  
*Shepherd* lead me to thy grove  
If burning noon infect the sky,  
The sick'ning sheep to covert fly,  
The sheep not half so faint as I,  
Thus overcome with love.

*Watts.*

ALL the characters and offices of Jesus Christ declare his union with his people; they express the beneficent care he exercises over them; and they are admirably designed to teach us, how to make use of him under all the exigencies and changes of their lives; the result of which never fails to be the glory of his adored name. Among the variety of characters of Christ, no one is more excellent in itself, or more instructive to us, than that of a SHEPHERD. Be this the subject for our present meditation; and may he graciously vouchsafe so to reveal to us the riches of his love and the brightness of his glory, that each may appropriate the language of David: *The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore I shall not want*;—and, may the Lord grant we may never want an heart to praise him.

It will be our advantage to examine a few ancient prophecies relative to Messiah, under the character of a Shepherd, and to which Jesus referred when he said, *I am the good Shepherd*. The first which occurs is, Gen xlix.



24. *From thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel; that is, Messiah, who was to spring from Jacob, and the God of Jacob, to whom should be the gathering of the people, as a shepherd gathereth his flock; and who also is emphatically the foundation-stone on which the hopes of his people should rest for present and future felicity. By Isaiah it was said concerning this great personage, He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Stronger still, if possible, was the promise by Ezekiel; I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them; and ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God. But by Zechariah, the Lord ushered in the appearance of Messiah in a very extraordinary manner. Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.* Reviewing each of these prophecies, and comparing them with the life, character, and claim of Jesus, we have abundant reason to appropriate the text, and say of Jesus, *The Lord is my Shepherd.*

As the office of a shepherd is familiar, let us select a few instances of his ability and care, and we shall find that these will aid our reflection on Jesus, the Shepherd of Israel.—The shepherd receives his flock in charge; therefore Jesus, addressing his Father, concerning his sheep, said, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.*—As every wise pastor knows the individuals of his flock, so Jesus declared, *I know my sheep, and am known of mine.*—Eastern shepherds always went before their flocks, to remove hindrances from their paths; and, it is very certain, Jesus our fore-runner and all conquering Shepherd,

has removed every obstruction which our sins had produced, and opened a safe and plain path to heaven. It is, therefore, said, *When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.*—The chief office, however, of the shepherd is, to provide necessary pasture for the flock; and the testimony of David concerning the Lord his Shepherd is a copy of the experience of every believer: *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.*—No animals are more defenceless in themselves, nor more exposed to dangers, than sheep, and need the watchful eye, and the guardian arm of a faithful shepherd. We all like sheep are exposed to sins and foes; but Jesus is the good Shepherd that careth for his sheep; *They*, said he, *shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.*—Cleanly as sheep are, they frequently want washing; and this is certainly true of all that follow the Lord; and, as necessity requires, he washes them in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, and in the waters of affliction. Thus they are described as *a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, not one barren among them.*—Notwithstanding the excellence of the shepherd, and the fruitfulness of the pasture he provides, there is a strange propensity in sheep to go astray. Too true an emblem of ourselves! We have all gone astray in heart or in life, and perhaps in both. But Jesus seeks the lost sheep, recovers them from danger, and returns them to his fold. David has left a memento of this; *he restoreth my soul;* and Peter, like a wandering sheep, entangled in the barriers of iniquity, could never forget the gracious care of this powerful Shepherd, in restoring him to the comforts of his love!

Not detaining you any longer upon a detail of parallel between the shepherd of a flock and the good and gracious Shepherd of our souls, I shall call your attention to a few peculiarities which distinguish his character, and which claim both our faith and our admiration.—This blessed Shepherd, to rescue his flock from the curse of the law, the evil of sin, and the damnation of hell, assumed their nature, fulfilled the precepts of the law in his life, and suffered its penalties for them in his death. *I lay down my life for my sheep*, said the good Shepherd. The sword of vengeance, according to prophecy, did awake; the Shepherd was smitten, that the flock might be redeemed. Unparalleled love! See, see my brethren, you who are the flock of his pasture, your life purchased by his death; for though the price of pardon was his blood, his pity did not withdraw.—Jesus, the Shepherd of Israel, gives spiritual birth to all his flock, who, by nature, are dead in trespasses and in sins. *I am come*, said he, *that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*. With this life, the sheep have an ear created, by which they hear the shepherd's voice; for a stranger will they not follow. And, with this life also, the sheep receive a spiritual appetite for the food which the Shepherd provides. Else none would have believed in him, none would have followed him, nor feasted on the pastures of his love. This truth, however unpalatable to some, Jesus declared to many; *Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you*. What gratitude should you express to Jesus, who sought you when strangers, and brought you to the fold of God! —As the Shepherd of Israel gives life to his flock, so he goes before them to prepare pasture suited to their growth and nourishment. Incompetent to choose for

yourselves, behold Jesus prepares his grace, his providence, and his church, for you. Every thing suited with your comfort, peace, perseverance, and happiness, is prepared in your Shepherd's hand and heart; and it is from his fulness alone you can receive grace for grace. Even afflictions become excellent pasture to correct those humours, and carry off those disorders, to which the flock of Christ are subject. This faithful Shepherd will never leave nor forsake his sheep, but be sensibly present with them in the hour of dissolution. This was one reason why David so highly exulted in his Shepherd. *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.* To which we shall only add, that the period will arrive when this great Shepherd will personally appear in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, and sit upon the throne of his glory. Before him all nations shall be gathered, and he shall separate one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; his sheep he will welcome to his celestial fold of glory; the others will be dismissed his presence, and consigned to woe.

From this view of the character and office of Jesus, the Shepherd of Israel, no wonder we find such strong epithets used in the Scripture to declare his excellence. Peter celebrates him as *the Chief Shepherd*, as he is not only the proprietor of the flock of grace, but that it is from him all his ministers, as under shepherds, receive their call, qualifications, and success of their labours. Paul calls him, *the Great Shepherd of the sheep.* *Great* indeed! in wisdom, power, and love; *great* in the extent of his redeemed flock, a number that no man can number; and although *great* were the sufferings he en-



dured in accomplishing the salvation of his flock, yet infinitely *greater* will be that glory in which he shall appear at the last day. The whole of which receives additional lustre when we consider the perfection of his NATURE as MAN. He was without spot or blemish; this pure nature, taken into union with the GREAT GOD, must needs produce a glorious MEDIATOR, and an all-sufficient SHEPHERD for his people. Here then, may we not with ardent prayer unite with David, *Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth!* "Let thy power and thy glory appear in gathering in thy ransomed flock from among all nations, that they may unite and rejoice in one fold, under one Shepherd, for ever more."

A subject of very infinite importance now remains for us to determine. Are we numbered with the flock of Christ? and, can we with the utmost sincerity say with David, *The Lord is my Shepherd?* To be introduced among the visible flock of any denomination of Christians is not, of itself, sufficient to determine this point. We have already said, concerning the good Shepherd, that he putteth forth his own sheep, and goeth before them, and they follow him. As the sheep lodge in the fold through the darkness of the night, and by the rising sun are put forth to feed beneath its cheering rays: so Jesus, by his Spirit, regenerates the souls of his flock, puts them forth from their carnal, unbelieving state, and thereby renders them visible as his sheep. The mark of his bloody cross, from whence all their salvation flows, he puts upon them, and then gives them power and love to follow him as their chief and good Shepherd. Has this taken place between Jesus and you? He came to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and none



but those who feel how far they have wandered from God in the paths of disobedience, will prize the grace of this blessed Shepherd. Read the parable of the lost sheep, recorded in Luke xv. and may this gracious Shepherd make it a mean of convincing you of your danger, and then gather you to the arms of his mercy.

The flock of Christ, more or less, from the depravity of nature, the force of temptation, and the sufferings of life, are subject to fear. It would be enough for you to listen to the voice of your Shepherd, who says, *Fear not, little flock.* But that ancient promise of his pastoral office before recited, affords you still greater consolation. *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom.* Amidst all your sins and fears fly to his arms. Remember, Jesus your Shepherd will not only take care of you and your concerns, but he has gone before you through death to heaven, to prepare a place for you. The chief Shepherd shall appear to receive you to himself, no more to revolt from him, nor sin against him. In his bosom you shall for ever rest, and drink pure joy from the fountain head for ever and ever.

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## LECTURE XXXIV.

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### MORNING PRIVATE DEVOTION.

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PSALM CXXXIX. 18.

*When I awake I am still with thee.*

Spar'd yet another day to see  
The light, O may I walk therein;  
Increasing more and more in thee,  
A birth to God, a death to sin.  
Till meet for heav'n I wing my flight,  
And raise thee with the saints in light.  
*Langly.*

IT is universally acknowledged that religion consists in the enjoyment and worship of the most high God. The man who, by faith of the operation of God, is practically convinced that in this vale of tears he has no solid happiness but what is derived from communion with his everlasting Father in Jesus Christ, knows that days and months and years are no more to him than as he is assisted to walk in the light of God's countenance; improve the dispensations of providence, and anticipate that blissful state in which the **SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** creates eternal day. Under such impression, David penned this most excellent psalm.

Early as the dawn, sensible of the divine presence, he was solicitous to begin the day with God, and improve its various and successive events. From past experience Christians must be deeply convinced, that the day which is begun with sensible communion with God, ends with indescribable pleasures. On the contrary, when God is not enjoyed, and duty is wholly neglected, or indifferently performed, they unavoidably rush on the business

of the day, as the unthinking horse into the battle, and seldom fail to meet with some bitter cup, or fatal snare, before the curtain of the evening falls. I shall, in this lecture, offer you some instructions to assist your morning devotion, sincerely hoping God may make them beneficial to all.

REFLECTION. Preserved through the dangers of the night, intreat God to teach you, habitually, to meet the unfolding eye-lids of the morning with reflection; and, like the attracting magnet to its pole, your soul may fix upon your Lord and Saviour. Your mind thus disposed, I wish you to *reflect* on God's goodness in your preservation, especially if health attends your person. How many of your fellow creatures, at the same moment, may be left on beds of painful, languishing sickness; how many may have had their sleeping moments interrupted by devouring flames, or by the robber's hand! and many others may have made their beds their tomb, since the last setting sun, and gone the way from whence they shall not return! These thoughts will create in your heart a most charming sense of God's sparing goodness to you. *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed; because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is his faithfulness.* Remember, another day is now adding to the term of your life, and that each leaves the number less. Alas! how swift they fly! The AGED should remember that the current of time runs sensibly the stronger the nearer it verges to eternity; and, of course, very little time remains for you. It should be the duty of YOUTH to implore God, so to teach them that they may *number their days, and apply their hearts unto wisdom.* Each of you may now reflect, how many dark, sinful, and dangerous days you have passed.

This will melt you down in self-abasement; each past folly will prove a way-mark to your future conduct, and stimulate you to walk more humbly with God.—Let the morning teach you that you have another day's work to do. The worldling opens his eyes from sleep, probably before nature lifts the grey eye-lids of the morning; and, with eagerness, begins to review and to adjust his business for the day. *Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*, is a Scripture maxim, binding upon the disciples of Jesus. Such, however, will view the secular business of life as a secondary object, and first direct themselves to God for ability to perform the work of the day, as allotted in all its parts by infinite wisdom. In this you will readily perceive that you have something to do for the honour of your God; duties to be discharged for the benefit of your family; some act of forbearance, charity, or good-will, to your fellow creatures; and something for your own progress and growth in grace. Of all men, Christians have the most important work cut out for them; none are idle but those who bear the *name*, without the *nature* of Christianity. Your past experience, however small, must corroborate with the Scripture testimony, that *you know not what a day may bring forth*. Duties, losses, benefits, temptations, sorrows, perhaps in forms unknown to you before, may await you. In each you will be called to exercise those tempers which shall prove either your honour or your grief. With cool reflection, therefore, begin the day; and every adverse providence will make the less impression upon you; every duty will be more cheerfully performed. The husbandman, arising from his bed of rest, in order to combat the labour of the field, finds it necessary to partake of a repast at his table, that his animal

strength may be renewed. This will teach you, that another part of your morning's devotion is the lively exercise of

FAITH. What animal food is to the body, that, and more than that, Christ is to the soul. He is the bread of life, and the water of life; and every hungry soul, by faith, knows what it is to be satisfied with his fullness. *Faith*, amidst the graces of the soul, is somewhat like the main spring in your watch: when properly wound up, it sets the whole in motion; gives you the time of day, or evidence of salvation, comfort and duty; for it works by love. You must recollect, the Israelites were to gather the manna in the *morning*, although they were to eat of it all the day long; and you will find an essential benefit in a morning's believing meditation on the person and offices of Jesus Christ, who alone can maintain the life of your soul amidst the changes of the day. To these directions let me add, as nature and custom dictate you in the morning to adjust your person with apparel, so may you, by the hand of faith, *put on the Lord Jesus*—as a robe of righteousness, a garment of salvation, and as a complete suit of armour. Thus, with spiritual food and raiment, you may venture into the more busy scenes of life, and hope to close the day in peace. To stimulate you in this happy morning exercise of *faith*, it is said, *Messiah's goings forth are prepared as the morning; that he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.* Each of these beautiful figures are to instruct you what Christ hath done in his incarnation and resurrection; and what he will be to you by the influence of his grace; consequently, he is the proper object for your



believing meditation every morning. To establish you more firmly, fail not to read a portion of the Scriptures, and plead the influence of that divine Spirit, who was promised to *testify* of Christ, to *guide you into all truth*, and, of course, prove your everlasting Comforter. The next part of your morning devotion I shall name, is

PRAYER AND PRAISE. These are what I may call twin duties, recommended by Paul and other disciples. And these are inseparable in the breathings of a pious heart; because we cannot approach God in *prayer* for a present blessing, but what, on the least recollection, we must *praise* him for what we have received. In the exercise of these duties *reflection* is necessary to arrange our wants and our mercies; and *faith*, in order to plead the promises, and to be persuaded that God will assuredly grant us a supply. I do not suppose you are so perfect as that, in the performance of these duties, you are always free and happy, and meet with no opposition. So far from it, it is much easier for a person to read, hear, or preach, than to pray; because prayer is the most spiritual of all duties: it is what our depraved nature disrelishes; and, because we gain more by this than any other duty, Satan strives to interrupt. Neglect of prayer is one great cause why many professors are so extremely unsavory in their conversation, and so dark in their evidences of salvation. Rollin, in his ancient history, somewhere relates, that an Heathen commander told his foiled army, "I lost the battle to day, because I sought not the protection of the gods in the morning." Remember, few professors, who fall by temptations in the day, but what may trace their misfortunes to an habitual neglect of morning devotion. Earnestly look to God for a praying, believing heart, and for *the Spirit of supplications*.

Rather than arise abruptly from your knees in prayer; accustom yourselves earlier to arise from your beds. David says, *I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried, O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* Indeed, David had every reason to look up in firm confidence of his prayer being heard, his person preserved, and his soul abundantly blessed through the course of the day, let the duties or the sufferings that await him be what they may.

Although the benefits resulting from morning devotion produce their own reward, and fail not to habituate you to its delightful performance, yet it may afford you a pleasing stimulus to recollect, that the stones which good old *Jacob* had for his pillow in the night, he arose early in the morning to erect into a pillar of memorial of God's goodness in making the place to him a Bethel. *Moses* went up on the mount early in the morning, and was admitted to converse with God face to face, as a man converseth with his friend. *Joshua* arose early with the Ark, and took Jericho. I shall conclude my advice to you on this interesting subject, by calling your recollection to morning devotion as a just emblem, and an happy presage of your resurrection by Christ from the sleep of death; when, with David, and all the ransomed throng, you will behold the face of *Emmanuel* in righteousness, and be satisfied when you awake up with his likeness.

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## LECTURE XXXV.

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### THE ROOT OF THE MATTER.

JOB xix. 28.

—*The Root of the matter is found in me.*

Quickened by thee, and kept alive,  
I flourish and bear fruit;  
My life I from thy sap derive,  
My vigor from thy root.

A.T.

THE root of the matter being found in Job, was a reason he assigned against the persecution he suffered from the lips of his professed friends. *Why persecute ye me, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?* A very singular expression. Let us inquire what is that root possessed by Job, and who it is that may be said to find it.

1. Root, in general, is the first principle of any thing. It is that part of a plant concealed in the ground, contains virtually the essence of the plant, imbibes the juices of the earth, and transmits them to the other parts for their nutrition. In the formation of man, as a rational being, he was, no doubt, possessed of a moral principle of action; a *root* from whence the fruit of obedience should abound to his Creator. Thus God pronounced him *very good*. Ah! how baneful the powers of sin, which at once stripped this goodly tree of its fruit, and poisoned the very root! With this *root of iniquity*, all the offspring of Adam are born into the world; and from thence proceed those baneful fruits, so dishonourable to God, destructive to society, and fatal to the possessor. To correct human

nature, and moralize the habits, have been the unsuccessful attempts of philosophy in all ages; but the root of iniquity still remains, and bids defiance to human skill either to correct or to destroy. *All flesh hath corrupted his way upon the earth; the imaginations of man's heart are only evil, and that continually; there is none that doeth good, no not one.* This is that testimony which the great and holy God has made of our fallen nature, and which ought to make an indelible impression upon our hearts.—To return to the case of Job. Conscious of the depravity of his nature, and, according to his own sentiment, *no man can bring a clean thing out of an unclean;* so far from this bitter root of iniquity being found in him, and used as an argument why he should be exempt from persecution: he certainly was conscious, that sinful humanity *is born to trouble* of every kind and degree. Job, therefore, must have had some other meaning; in him was some other root than fallen nature possesses.

Let us now take the Gospel in our hand, by which we may not only understand the meaning of Job, but learn the way in which the God of grace restores sinners, by a new principle, to bear the fruit of righteousness; and the Lord grant the root of the matter may be found in us.

In the Bible, Jesus, the Son of God, is called *the root of David*; as GOD, he is the author of all natural existence; as MEDIATOR, he is the author of eternal salvation. In his humiliation he was esteemed *a root out of a dry ground*: nevertheless, from him proceed every blessed fruit worthy of God to bestow, and necessary for us to enjoy. Job knew that his Redeemer liveth, and this formed the root, the principle, the source of all his consolation in life, and in prospect of his resurrection from the dead. This he declared in the very verses connected with our



**Text.** That this Redeemer, as the root of salvation was **IN** him, is a privilege in common with all the children of grace. Paul assures us, *that God, who seperated him from his mother's womb, and called him by grace, also revealed his Son in him.* All who have thus received Christ Jesus, the Lord, are said to be *rooted and built up in him.* How expressive is this emblem! as the root is secret beneath the ground, and only known by the fruit which it produces: so the religion of the heart, the inward possession of Christ, can only be determined by those who happily possess him, and bear the fruit of righteousness to the praise of God.

Job calling this the root of the *matter*; is a phrase which is worth our attention. Jesus, the Son of God, is the matter of our **ELECTION**, *chosen in him before the foundation of the world*—our **REDEMPTION**, *for he purchased the Church with his own blood*—our **JUSTIFICATION**, *he is the Lord our Righteousness*—our **REGENERATION**, *created in Christ Jesus unto good works*—our **SANCTIFICATION**, *from him is our fruit found*—the basis of our **HOPE** for future bliss, *Christ in you, the hope of glory!* **CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL.**—Collecting these observations, we may learn something of the intrinsic excellence of Christianity. *A man, says Solomon, shall not be established by wickedness; but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.—The root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.*—They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing, to show that the Lord is upright, and that there is no unrighteousness in him. Happy are the people who are in such a case, yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord! How necessary and important is it to know our interest in this felicity! Job said, *The root of the matter is found in me;* let us then, according to our design,



2. Enquire who it is that may be said to find it.—No doubt we must first name the person who possesses it. The religion of the heart is neither founded in ignorance nor in insensibility. It is neither in sleep nor enthusiastic visions that God conveys the root of the matter to the soul. *I know*, said Paul, *in whom I have believed. Christ liveth in me. By the grace of God I am what I am.* Although all men may not know the period when God changed their state, nor possess equal sensibility; yet they can as certainly know that the root of the matter is in them, as that a living tree is known by the fruit which it bears. The Christian knows by experience, that his comfort and his hope materially depend upon the persuasion that God has implanted the root of the matter in him; and, as it is a blessing which he could not have provided for himself, it creates the most sublime expressions of gratitude to God for his unspeakable gift.—We have reason to say, that, no sooner is the root of the matter formed in the heart, than *Satan* is competent to find it. The liberty which God hath given *Satan* to gain access to the human breast, evinces the astonishing powers of that fallen being. The fact, however, is indisputable. *Satan* found the root of the matter in Job, and asked God leave to tempt him with severity. He did so. But, so far from the root being torn from the heart of Job, the temptations and trials he endured had the happy tendency to make it seven-fold more fruitful. It is equally so with all who have union with Jesus. The root of the matter is an object of the devil's most implacable hatred, find it in whom he may. But the promise of God, by Isaiah, to the Church, under the emblem of a vineyard of red wine, may with equal justness be applied to the root of the matter in the soul: *I the Lord do keep*

*it, I will water it every moment ; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* We may also add, the root of the matter in the heart is found by the Church, by Ministers, and by Christians. By this we do not presume that one man is competent positively to determine the heart of another, but from analogy of experience, and in the judgment of charity. *As in water, face answereth to face : so the heart of man to man.* There are lines of experience in a conviction of sin ; embracing the Saviour, and a devotedness to God, which fail not to correspond in all who are taught by the Spirit. *By their fruit ye shall know them,* is an unerring rule given by Christ to his disciples to determine the character of others. And it is highly necessary that the root of the matter should be found in all those who are candidates for the ordinances of Christ, and the communion of saints.

Having thus attempted to explain what is the root of the matter, and by whom it may be said to be found, let us improve the reflections for ourselves. Our sentiments and actions are dictated and governed by principle. There is in us a root of iniquity producing its baneful fruit of unbelief, enmity, and impiety ; or, the supernatural root of grace, counteracting the evil propensities of the heart, and yielding the sublime pleasures of Christianity. Never be so vain as to expect the leaves of profession, the flowers of gifts, and the fruit of obedience, will be produced acceptable to God, or satisfactory to yourselves, without they proceed from an union with the Saviour. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except you abide in Christ. If the root be holy, so are the branches. That a corrupt tree should bring forth good fruit is contrary to nature ; and, that a man who has nothing in him but the

corrupt root of sin should bring forth fruit unto holiness, is as contrary to grace. How important is it, therefore, that we should examine ourselves, that we may not be deceived ! On this occasion we cannot but bring to remembrance the case of the second class of hearers mentioned by our Lord in his parable of the sower. *He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it : yet hath he not root in himself ; but dureth for a while : for when tribulation or persecution ariseth, because of the word, by and by he is offended.* The natural passions of this man were awakened ; he sustained a profession for a while, how long we cannot say ; but eventually his hearing and his pleasure are turned into offence. The cause of all this is attributed to his *having no root in himself* ; he possessed nothing but a stony heart ! May the recital of this man's case awaken your attention, and inspire you with the most solemn concern to know the state of your souls for eternity. God forbid that you should maintain a profession of religion, while you possess nothing within you but the cold, hard, obdurate heart of unbelief ! Such profession may endure for a while ; but some fatal event will take place, when, to use our Lord's expression, *the sun will be up, and they be scorched.* It is my ardent prayer that God may convey this instruction to your mind, and reveal Christ to your heart ! Possessed of this most precious Saviour, you will know the meaning of *he root of the matter.* From thence pardon, righteousness, peace, and joy, will be produced in rich abundance. You will prove an ever green in the garden of the Lord. The blasts of winter shall not destroy you. Thus may we not conclude in the charming language of the prophet, *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose*

*hope the Lord is. For he shall be as the tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh; but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.*

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## LECTURE XXXVI.

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### INCREASING IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

EPHESIANS iii. 19.

—*To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.*

Let me love thee more and more,  
If I love at all I pray,  
If I have not lov'd before,  
Help me to begin to-day.

*Newton.*

OF all mental attainments, the knowledge of the love of Christ is the greatest. For, it assures the soul of salvation, constrains to purest obedience, supports under the greatest sorrows, and survives the loss of all human acquirements. It yields the most animating cordial under the sorrows of death, and assures the soul of immortality and glory beyond the grave. This knowledge is the free and gracious gift of God; those who enjoy it, as ardently pant after more abundant increase, as the hart panteth after the refreshing stream. The persons to whom Paul wrote this epistle certainly did, in a measure, know the love of Christ; for, the possession of that love was essential to their Church communion. And although he asserts the love of Christ to surpass knowledge, yet it is to be understood as expressive of its absolute extent and infinite fulness. For, as Dr. Owen says, "We may know that experimentally, which we cannot know comprehensively: we may know that in its power and effects which we cannot comprehend in its nature and depths. A weary person may receive refreshment from a spring,



though he cannot fathom the depth of the ocean from whence it proceeds." It is presumed that in some measure you have been taught the knowledge of the love of Christ, and that you wish a more abundant increase. This discourse, therefore, is to direct you to a few of those means by which you may attain it; and my prayer is that you may find it more operative upon your heart and life.

1. Seek the perpetual aid of the HOLY GHOST. To this divine agent our Lord directed his disciples, who should *teach them all things*. This was necessary, for the world by wisdom knew not God; no rules of art, no rays of science, could possibly convey the knowledge of the love of Christ to their hearts, or ours, so as to diffuse its sacred benefits to the soul. *No man can call Jesus the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*; and it is expressly declared, *the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us*. The nature of the love of Jesus is like himself, unchangeable; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever: but our perception and enjoyment of it admit of variation. We cannot say, our comfort in the love of Jesus was the same yesterday and to-day; and, if the nature of the love of Jesus was as changeable as our enjoyment of it, it would be equally as unworthy of himself to bestow it, as it would be uncertain to us. I therefore direct you to the everlasting love of Jesus; and esteem it a pleasurable truth for you to believe, that the same Spirit who first taught you the love of Christ, will continue to increase that knowledge. When, therefore, you feel unfruitful and inanimate, wishing at the same time that your heart may expand towards the Saviour, repair to the throne of mercy, and by prayer plead for the teaching of the Holy Ghost, from this most encouraging promise, *He giveth his Spirit to them that ask him*.

2. Contemplate the grandeur of the PERSON OF JESUS. As the knowledge of persons, the beauties of their features, and the gracefulness of their deportment fail not to captivate us in their esteem ; much more a perception of the excellencies of Jesus will assuredly enkindle our warmest affections, and draw us nearer to his heart. Jesus possesses all the attributes of Godhead, all the virtues of manhood. And such are the perfections united in his person as our Redeemer, exhibited in numberless characters and offices, that we have just reason to exclaim with Zechariah, *How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!* the altogether lovely ; the chief among ten thousand ! Every time we contemplate the excellencies of Jesus, new wonders arise and confirm our hope in the fulness of his redemption. Peter's sentiment concerning the glorified Saviour was admirably just, *Whom having not seen we love ; in whom though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory ; receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.* No peace, no consolation, no pleasurable delight and perseverance in our race which is set before us, but by *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.* To such sacred enjoyments the Saviour invites us. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth ; for I am God, and besides me there is no Saviour.* Those who look to this Redeemer, and by faith contemplate his glory, will find a transforming efficacy upon their hearts. *All we with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.* It is impossible to have a sight of Jesus without an attractive influence upon our hearts ! To hear of Jesus, though from the most eloquent lips,

without being engaged in contemplating his glory, is like partaking of the most charming repast by the light of the moon, in the severity of ice and snow. But he who feels aright, enjoys the genial warmth of the sun of righteousness; his affections ascend on high, and he is not ashamed to declare

A very wretch, Lord, I should be,  
Had I no love to thee :  
Rather than not my Saviour love,  
O may I cease to be !

3. I next recommend you, attentively to read the HISTORY OF YOUR SAVIOUR'S LOVE. This history is contained in the Bible. Here you will learn that the love of Christ is divine, everlasting, free, rich, eternal, infinite; and thus be compelled to adore Jesus as the GOD OF LOVE. You will perceive the variety in which the love of Jesus is expressed to a race of sinners. That he who was equal with God should be made in the form of a servant; become a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; though Lord of all, to have no where on earth to lay his head; to agonize and sweat great drops of blood in Gethsemane—to suffer sentence of condemnation to be passed upon him at the bar of his own creatures—to be spit upon, buffeted, scourged, and, in the issue, suffer the ignominious and accursed death of the cross, under all the wretchedness that man could devise, or the wrath of God could inflict: For what—for whom? To satisfy justice, and to redeem sinners, the vilest of the human race! All this to bring them, and I hope to bring you also near to God, to enjoy him as your father and your portion for evermore! O what manner of love is this! What heart but must

yield to tears, repentance, and to grateful love ! Dwell upon this history ; let it not only have place in your memory, but let it be inscribed upon your heart. Here you learn the value of immortal souls, the heinousness of sin, the inflexibility of Jehovah's justice ; and, above all, how dear and precious you must be to Jesus, thus to love, and bleed, and die for you !

In the Scriptures I would solicit you to read the history of the many conversions, deep experiences, and triumphant death beds, which are there recorded ; each of which will assuredly increase your knowledge of the love of Christ. Peter, James, John, Zaccheus, Matthew, Magdalene, all proclaim the boundless love of the Prince of Peace. What but pure love could have produced the conversion of three thousand souls, who, with infernal rage, were accessory to the death of Jesus ? In all the instances of conversion, experiences, and death triumphs recorded in the Bible, we may bring forward Paul as declaring on behalf of all, the source from whence such goodness flowed :—*Christ loved me, and gave himself for me.* Therefore, to him that loved us, and washed us in his own blood, be glory for ever and ever !

—Is there not yet another volume in which you may read the history of a Saviour's charming love ? What think you, my hearers, of your own heart and life ? Ah ! unhappy that breast, which, like a blank volume that can produce no marks nor lines of love from Christ ? A blank—an affecting blank indeed ! Yet the page cannot be pure ; though nothing there can be read that speaks a Saviour's love, there must be that guilt and unbelief which make it, like Ezekiel's roll, *full of lamentation and of woe !* Perhaps it is not so. Though you may not boast a large volume of a Saviour's grace, there may be some pre-



vious lines, some few pages which neither time nor storms can possibly destroy. Yes, the history of his love ; the time when first he claimed your hand and heart ; how that love pursued you through the maze of life ; turned your afflictions into blessings, and, to this moment, preserves your heart in love towards him. Read, then, this volume of your own experience, and be assured that every line will have a happy tendency to increase you in the knowledge of the love of Christ.

4. My concluding advice will be, to contemplate what Jesus hath promised yet to do for you ; and by so doing you will find it an excellent lesson to teach you still more of the knowledge of the love of Christ. We know not what a day may bring forth ; the Lord hath in infinite goodness concealed the knowledge of future events from us, purposely to give a spring to action, keep us watchful, and lead us along in daily dependence upon his arm. If spared yet a little longer, you may be called to perform many new duties ; combat with many temptations in forms unknown to you before ; pass through scenes of disappointment and grief, of which you have not now the faintest expectation ; and likewise undergo many out-breakings of your depraved, sinful heart, that hitherto, like furious beasts, have kept their dens and caves. In each, and under all, how can you pass along with honour to your God, or pleasure to yourself ? Only by living upon a Saviour's love. He will love you to the end. He gives you multitudes of precious promises in his word for your comfort ; not one of which but affords you the picture of his loving heart. See what fulness it hath pleased the Father should dwell in his Son ; and it is the Son's delight, by his Spirit daily, and as you need, to confer this grace upon you. Still there is an end, and thy expectations shall



not be cut off. You know you must die. Indeed, you would not wish to live alway. Remember then, your death bed : the time, place, manner, and cause of your death are all prepared, and shall be performed in love. Only believe this, and death will instantly be disarmed to you. And oh ! pleasing employ, then to read the history of your Saviour's love in what he hath prepared for you beyond the grave ! Kingdoms shall fall ; crowns shall fade away ; and the blazing sun shall cease to shine ;—but in yonder bright abode a *kingdom* awaits you that never shall dissolve ; a *crown of righteousness* shall sparkle on your head through the blaze of an eternal day ; and you shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of your Father for ever and ever !

How unspeakably happy must that family be, whose bosoms glow with the love of Jesus ! Be assured it will support you under every disappointment, sanctify your conversation, and constrain you to every act of duty connected with your relation in private or public life. This will tune your lips to praise redeeming love ; and while in prospect of future bliss, look up to Christ with ardent prayer.

Each moment draw from earth away

My heart, that lowly waits thy call ;

Speak to my inmost soul and say,

I am thy love, thy God, thy all !

To feel thy pow'r, to hear thy voice,

To taste thy love, be all my choice.

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## LECTURE XXXVII.

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### CHRIST MORE PRECIOUS THAN THE GOLDEN WEDGE OF OPHIR.

ISAIAH xiii. 12.

*I will make a man more precious than fine gold ; even a  
man than the golden wedge of Ophir.*

Not health, nor wealth, nor sounding fame,  
Nor earth's deceitful empty name,  
With all its pomp, and all its glare,  
Can with a precious Christ compare.

S. M.

THIS, and the following chapter contain a prophecy of the destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians, about two hundred years before it was accomplished. It is asserted by some celebrated expositors, that so great was to be the slaughter, few male inhabitants should escape the sword ; that the king of Babylon should not be able to possess a man of his own, nor hire troops of his neighbouring nations, to defend his city from destruction, even at the price of *the golden wedge of Ophir*. In objection to this, it need only be replied, Babylon was not taken by long siege, but by immediate surprize ; when the king had no time to collect his forces, nor hire others from neighbouring nations. The work was done in one night. Rather, herefore, the text, may literally relate to Cyrus, king of Persia, whom the Lord raised up, and before whom the Lord went to *open the two-leaved gates of brass* for the sake of delivering his captive Israel. This man, Cyrus, therefore, was certainly more valuable and precious to the Jews than fine gold ; for their liberty could

not have been purchased at the most extensive price. But if this be the literal meaning of the text, I am of opinion it has a still more extensive and spiritual signification. It is well known to those who are familiar with the writings of the evangelical prophet Isaiah, that when reciting deep calamities which should be inflicted on the nations for their sins, he would frequently speak of the great Messiah, by whom pardon should be received, and peace proclaimed. Our text is an instance of this. Jesus, the promised Messiah, is that man eminently and exclusively so, more valuable and precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir. Dr. Gill says, "This is interpreted by the Jews, of the king Messiah; for, in an ancient writing of theirs, where, having mentioned this passage, it is added, 'This is the Messiah that shall ascend and be more precious than all the children of the world, and all the children of the world shall worship before him.'" *Zohar in Gen. Fol. lxxi. 1.*

I am far from wishing to strain any text to serve the cause of a favourite opinion; but this passage appears to me so consonant to other texts, and the natural emblem used is so replete with ideas descriptive of Christ, that I am induced to employ this Lecture to offer you a few general remarks on the subject.

1. By the most correct accounts of gold, it is not found in a state of ore, but mixed with sulphur, as is common with other metals; nor is it found in ore of its own, but in that of other metals, especially copper and silver. From German mines it is collected in pure mass; and in Guinea in loose particles, mingled with the sand of rivers. The gold of Ophir, in the days of Job, David, and Solomon, was deemed the most precious and valuable, though the best modern writers are undivided in their opinion in

what country Ophir was situated.\* This natural and singular production, you will perceive, may justly be applied as an emblem of Jesus, whose humanity was supernaturally of the Virgin, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus he was the seed of the woman and not of the man, according to the promise. He was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, not begotten as in the ordinary generation of mankind. It is this that makes the man Christ Jesus more precious than fine gold. In him was no sin; and thus far he was able to obey the precepts of the law, and become a sin-offering without spot to God, for the purpose of our redemption. Isaiah predicted this wonderful Saviour, and sweetly sang his birth: *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* For us was he born; for us he lived; for us he died; and for us he ever reigns!

2. Gold is the most fixed of all metals; and is generally believed to be such in every degree of fire excited

\* Sumatra has long been known to abound with gold; and some chasms occasioned by a recent earthquake, have exposed such wealth as to induce an opinion at Fort Marlborough, that this island contains as much gold as either Mexico or Peru. In the Lemong country, a pure gold, of a whitish colour, is found in the dust, and lodged in very hard stones on the surface; it is likewise found in a clayish red loam, extending to the depth of three feet and an half, and in others of less depth, consisting of irregularly shaped stones of a mouldering nature, mixed with red clay and hard pebbles. The natives disengage the gold from the stones by breaking them. This district is 70 or 80 miles inland from Sumatra; but the road to it is, from the number of wild beasts, impassable, excepting to strong parties.

Sumatra is supposed to have been the Ophir of Solomon, from the circumstances of the word in the Malay language signifying a mountain containing gold.

*The Star.*



by human art. On a review of the life, sufferings, and death of Jesus Christ; and the temper and firmness with which he endured them, we cannot but believe him to be that singular man of promise in our text, more precious than fine gold. Fire is the well known Scripture emblem of the afflictions of mankind; and also of the indignation of God against sin. The fiery furnace of affliction through which Jesus passed was not prepared according to the common lot of sinful mankind; but by the determinate council and fore-knowledge of God, as he was to be the sin-bearer, and Redeemer of his people. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs. Hunger, thirst, pain, calumny; even the vilest contradiction of sinners against himself; these, with the tortures of the cross, with all its attendant horrors of death, were apportioned to him. Above all, wrath, that tremendous fiery wrath due to us as transgressors of the holy law, was borne by Jesus. The sufferings of Christ in his body were confessedly great; but the sorrows of his soul were beyond finite comprehension. How truly awful was God's denunciation of his wrath against the disobedient Hebrews! *The house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you, in mine anger and in my fury; and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof.* This judgment was as certainly executed upon



Jerusalem, as it was dreadful in its nature ; and, to this day, the house of Israel is scattered upon the earth as dross that hath passed through the furnace. Still it is but a temporal calamity. The wages of sin is death ; the fulness of which is to be endured in the future state, in a separation from the sensible smiles of the Lord, and a consignment to that fire which is never quenched, where the smoke of their torments ascend as the smoke of a mighty furnace for ever and ever. This scriptural account of the temporal and endless punishment of men, for sin, is introduced, purposely to show you the severity of those sufferings which Jesus must endure, to save any of the human race. Jesus, Messiah, the man more precious than fine gold, must pass through a furnace of divine wrath proportionate to the number he should redeem. Christ suffered for sin ; he bore the curse while hanging on the tree ; his soul was that furnace heated by divine justice ; it became sorrowful, even unto death ; the fire of divine indignation proved him ; and he came forth from the furnace, in his triumphant resurrection from the dead, demonstrating himself to be the Son of God with power. and the man more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir. Jesus, the Saviour, is therefore gold tried in the fire ; able to save to the very uttermost all that come unto God by him. Come then, my fellow sinners, venture on him, and eternal bliss is sure.

3. The principal design for which David and Solomon procured the gold of Ophir, was, that it should be wrought into vessels and furniture for the palace, and for the temple of the Lord. The ark of the covenant, the altar, the table of shew-bread, and the mercy-seat were all overlaid with pure gold. *All these*, we are informed in the New Testament, *were shadows ; but the body, the sub-*

*stance, was Christ.* No doubt this golden furniture of the ancient temple directed the faith of the Hebrews to look forward to the promised Messiah, who was to fill the temple with his glory. In the New Testament Church, all the ordinances, institutions, and privileges, are, if I may so say, covered, within and without, with this gold of Ophir; the *name*, the *authority*, the *glory* of Jesus are resp'endent upon them all!—We are informed, the very floor of the ancient temple was overlaid with pure gold; which no doubt could likewise instruct the worshippers that their standing and their walking were in Messiah. Nay, the very roof of that magnificent edifice was covered with gold; so that, let the Israelites look beneath them, or above them, they might be taught to believe the promised Saviour was the hope and the glory of his people on earth and in heaven. Certain it is, Christ is the foundation of all the new-born children of God; on him they stand for their acceptance in his righteousness; in him they walk acceptably before God; and, to him they look to be glorified in heaven. Christ, the man more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir, is to them *all, and in all!*

4. Gold enriches its possessors, and gives them ability to obtain what other enjoyments may ensure their temporal felicity. Infinitely more so, those who by faith possess Jesus, the man more precious than fine gold, are made rich to all the happiness of time and eternity. The riches of Christ are durable and unsearchable; and our Lord invites us *to buy of him gold in the fire, that we may be rich.* Thousands possess gold, but with it have an heart in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. But those who receive Jesus are made *new creatures.* Many who roll in affluence, when they come

to a dying hour, would give mountains of gold for peace with God ; but those who believe in Christ have peace through his blood, and delight in the Lord. And such are the vicissitudes of life, and the uncertainty of riches, that a man may abound in gold to-day, and to-morrow be reduced to abject poverty ; but an interest in Jesus never can be lost ; he is to his people what he is in himself, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. To which I may add ; as an unfortunate man involved in debt, clothed with rags, and perishing with hunger, on the gift of gold is competent to change his state with joy ; so, infinitely more so, the sinner, conscious of his guilt, condemnation and misery, on the reception of Jesus Christ, experiences that pardon, righteousness, hope and faith, more precious than the gold that perisheth, constituting him an happy man. We cannot omit reciting that charming prophetic description of Christ and his Church in the forty-fifth Psalm. *Upon his right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir ; her clothing is of wrought gold.* From Jesus, the man more precious than fine gold, the Church receives her rich and glorious garments of righteousness and holiness. *His head is as most fine gold ; his hands are as rings of gold set with beryl ; and upon his head is a crown of pure gold.* Thus, by this natural scriptural emblem, the gold of Ophir, we at once behold the incomparable richness, durability and grandeur of Christ Jesus, in union with his bride the Church. To you, therefore, that believe, Jesus is precious beyond the power of expression.

5. It is worthy of remark in our text, Jehovah says, *I will MAKE a man more precious, &c.* It is the work of God. *Christ Jesus, of God, is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* The council, power, grace, and everlasting love of the Father

were displayed in constituting the person, atonement, and redemption of Christ for our souls. This work is perfect; so complete, that while it requires not the aid of human merit, it bids defiance to all the rage of hell to destroy. It is equally true, that it is the work of God, by the power of his Spirit, to make Christ more precious to the souls of men than the golden wedge of Ophir. Gold is the object of the carnal heart; and Christ is disesteemed. But, when the Spirit regenerates the heart, reveals its vileness, and shows the richness of Emmanuel; there is an incessant desire for the possession of Christ, the gold of Ophir. May this be your happy case! Where the treasure is, there will your heart be also. Jesus is attractive gold to the conscious sinner; none will pant after him, till they are convinced they must perish without him. In the possession of Christ, you will be rich in the midst of poverty; you will enjoy pleasures in extremities of pain; possess an hope of life in the agonies of death! Then, farewell all ye treasures of a deceitful world;—farewell ye votaries of worldly bliss! Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift of his Son Jesus; more precious to me than ten thousand mountains of the gold of Ophir.

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## LECTURE XXXVIII.

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### CONTENTMENT.

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HEBREWS xiii. 5.

*Be content with such things as ye have.*

My God, if thou art mine indeed,  
Then I have all my heart can crave;  
A present help in time of need,  
Still kind to hear, and strong to save.

*Steel.*

**C**ONTENTMENT is a cheerful acquiescence in that station which providence hath assigned us; and a satisfaction with that portion of temporal good which we enjoy, without an eager thirst for more. Since our judgments are so imperfect, our affections so carnal, and our wills, naturally, by sin, so rebellious against God, no wonder that *contentment* is possessed by so few, and that even those who have it, find many occasions for an increase of this charming temper. Discontent, the offspring of pride, turned *Angels* out of heaven. The same evil temper was the procuring cause of Adam and Eve being expelled the garden of Eden; and it too often occurs, that by discontent our condition in life is rendered worse. Let us then, at least, begin, with Paul, *to learn in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content.* Christ is the only **TEACHER** at whose feet we can learn contentment with real advantage; and under his divine instruction we shall find that this temper does not float on the surface of the mind, but takes its seat in the heart; becomes habitual, diffusing peace, tranquillity and blessedness in the



soul. In our acquiring contentment, under the instruction of our Divine Teacher, we will, at least, look into three volumes.

The first we will read is what I shall call **THE BOOK OF HUMAN LIFE**. Herein we may learn, that however diversified the scenes of mankind, high and low, rich and poor, ignorant and learned, healthy and decrepid, the whole are apportioned by one supreme infinitely **WISE BEING**. Consider for a moment how many persons are ensnared by the very treasures which you are so anxious to grasp. Look around, and see how great the number of those whose case, in person and circumstances, is infinitely more painful and wretched than your own. Ask yourselves, Would you be willing to exchange with those afflicted, distressed persons? Review your past life; has not providence to you been exceedingly kind; and his goodness much greater than you could have expected or desired? Were there not some dark, intricate, dangerous scenes in your life, in which the hand of God, unseen, was extended for your relief, and conducted you in paths much safer and more advantageous than your own sanguine wishes could desire? Are not these strong reasons for contentment in your present state? Why not be satisfied that the same divine hand should guide you through your future path, which hath hitherto conducted you with so much care. Even now, if left to your own choice, are you certain you should choose that path, or that object, which would issue in your happiness? Alas! how many instances are there, when men of supposed sagacity have extended their arms, and, instead of embracing an expected object, have found nothing but a shadow to mortify their ambition! Besides, consider the brevity of human life. Go, visit the

tombs of the miser, the ambitious, the voluptuary, the enterprising; and there learn how short are the gay scenes, and the most promising gratifications of our carnal appetites. Death may soon cut your life short; and the very earthly enjoyments you are now so anxious to possess, may not find you to receive them. Learn, therefore, to be content with your present portion. Painful anxiety for future, always imbitters the present possession of what we enjoy. Act the part of a dependent creature upon an independent God, living upon his daily bounty; and express your contentment and gratitude for the numberless instances of his goodness towards you. If the book of human life afford us such moral lessons to produce contentment, let us now open

**The BIBLE.** If you are Christians indeed, in this volume you may acquire contentment in higher perfection than nature can teach you. Herein you learn, that by your unnumbered sins you have justly forfeited your right to the least comfort of life; and that all you enjoy is the grant of rich, unmerited mercy. This persuasion will lay you low in the dust of self-abasement, and lead you rather to thank the good hand of God for what you enjoy, than murmur that you possess no more. As one justly acknowledged, “any thing short of hell, is our mercy!”—By the Scriptures you will bring to recollection the poverty, tears, sufferings, and death of your dear Saviour, who hath redeemed you by his blood; and through whom alone all the blessings, even of this life, are bestowed upon you. Can you cultivate discontent in your present situation, when Jesus left the bosom of his Father, became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs; had no where to lay his head; hungry, thirsty, cold, afflicted, despised, crucified, for you? Impossible! Besides, in the Bible,

you learn the infinite value and happiness of a saved soul; in preference to a decorated, well-fed body, which, at any rate, will only give a better meal to the worms of the grave. It is generally found, that when God denies the outward comforts and luxuries of life, it is to answer some valuable end, and make up the supposed loss in the more sensible communications of himself. Hence it is many Christians have been more humble, lively, and useful while treading the path of adversity, than when surrounded with affluence. You should ever bear upon your mind, that if God is your Father in Christ Jesus, all his conduct with you is in love. If, therefore, you have but little, your Father's blessing makes that little truly sweet; and is more highly to be prized than the abundant riches of the wicked. If you could change your present condition and temporal circumstances, are you certain that you would commit less sin, have fewer temptations, and bring more honour to God than you now do? Perhaps not. If such a station would be attended with spiritual advantages, be assured the love which God bears to you would soon accomplish it. Ministers, above others, need to cultivate a large share of contentment, because they are often led into dark and apparently discouraging paths. Satan is more busy with them than with others; and they are equally anxious with other men to see good in their days. Hence they are often faint, and cast down, ready to leave their work and their station. This was not only the case of Jeremiah, but we have an affecting instance of it in the history of Jonah. How much better for him to have been content to go to Ninevah, than to have dishonoured his profession in the ship, and provoked God to give him a bed in the whale's belly. The best consideration for Ministers, as well as others, is, first to determine if you

are satisfied that you really occupy that spot where you believe God in his providence has placed you. Then, punctually discharge every duty enjoined upon you, live near to Christ, leave every event, however painful, to his wise disposal; and, in due time, you will find that the Lord hath done all things well.

The other volume I purposed to recommend to your frequent meditation is on a truly solemn subject; it is what I may name the BOOK OF ETERNITY. Our blessed Lord taught his disciples fortitude, resignation, and dependence on his Father for perpetual supply out of this very volume. *Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* Of course, they might be content under the vicissitudes of present life, and the discouragements of their ministry. He that hath prepared them a kingdom, will most assuredly take care of them in their way thither. Our Lord and Saviour hath brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. Many volumes have been written, inquiring, "If there be a future state?" But, it is the excellence of the Bible to assure us of that state, and to inform us in what that state consists. The unbounded bliss of the righteous, and the inconceivable misery of the wicked, are so rationally and justly described, that they ought to make the most solemn impression upon the thoughtful mind. You will not fail to learn a lesson on contentment from the account which our Lord hath recorded on the rich man's avarice, which led him to hell; and of poor Lazarus, with all his misfortunes, who was safely conveyed by Angels to Abraham's bosom.—Let us remember, that time is short. We shall not want the world much longer; death, and a vast eternity, will soon appear. If heaven is our final home, the less we have upon our back the casier we shall



travel, and the sooner it will be thrown off at death. Besides, the more you meditate on Eternity, and hold your conversation in heaven, the more contentment will you have with your Father's will on earth. Your spirit will be preserved serene ; your example will be valuable to others, and you will prove an honour to that God who is your guide and your portion for ever.

Let me now exhort you who are in a single capacity, and you who have families, in your various relations in life, frequently, with attention, to read the book of Human Life—the Holy Bible,—and the Book of Eternity ; and may the Spirit of God inspire you with faith, prayer, and love, that your profiting may appear unto all. You will find it true according to the Scripture, that *Godliness, with contentment, is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. Let your conversation, therefore, be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have ; for God hath said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you.* All that is transitory ; our wealth, connections, dearest friends, must be left soon. If we are really interested in Jesus, and live by faith upon him, all we can quit by death is a mere shadow, compared with what we most certainly shall enjoy with him in heaven. Therefore, live above the world ; be content and thankful for the abundant goodness of God towards you ; be ready for your great and last change by death ; and be assured your latter end will be crowned with peace and unutterable joy.



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## LECTURE XXXIX.

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### THE CHRISTIAN'S PROGRESS.

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#### PSALM lxxxiv. 7.

*They go from strength to strength.*

Lord, hast thou made me know thy ways?  
Conduct me in thy fear;  
And grant me such supplies of grace  
That I may persevere.

Be Thou my all-sufficient Friend,  
Till all my toils shall cease;  
Guard me through life, and let my end  
Be everlasting peace.

THIS text was descriptive of the happy progress of the worshippers in ancient Zion, and is equally so of the persevering saints of God in every age. In this Lecture I shall attempt to describe the persevering Christian, in hope God may enable you to perceive your own likeness, and assist you with greater animation to pursue the arduous journey of life.

1. That the persevering Christian is a LIVING CHARACTER, must be obvious to all. To go from place to place, from strength to strength, is the evident motion of a living body, and is strictly true of the spiritual motion of that soul which is made alive by the power of the Lord Jesus. Such have experienced what in scripture is denominated *a new birth*. Christ is our life. The soul that possesses him is set in motion towards God; desire, faith, hope, love are in the most sensible and happy exercise. He hath *eyes* to see objects of a spiritual nature, never beheld before; he *tastes* the sweets of re-

deeming grace in Jesus, for which he never possessed a relish until now; and his *feet* are taught to walk in paths, the reverse of his former life and conversation. Thus, though sometime darkness, he is now made light in the Lord. Before, he was a vassal in the kingdom of Satan: now, he is translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Let me, therefore, ask if the Lord hath performed this mercy for you? Unless you have life in you, it is impossible you should have spiritual motion. Bring this first and most important point home to the heart, and be assured, unless you have been born again, you have not yet taken one step towards the kingdom of heaven. But, should you have received life from Christ, you will perceive

2. That the next trait in a persevering Christian is, a consciousness of a CHANGE OF PLACE. Going, expressed in our text, is leaving one point, and passing on to another. Christ first gives life, then calls it into exercise. *My sheep hear my voice, they follow me.* The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Like Ephraim, *the Lord taketh him by the hand, and teacheth him to go.* Jesus leaves not the sinner as he finds him; but gives him power to fly from the wrath to come. He finds such under the curse of a violated law; yet unguardedly attached to it, as the source of his hope; therefore Jesus conducts him to the burning mountain of Sinai for sentence of death, and then directs him to Calvary for everlasting life.—He goes out of himself, step by step, to enjoy a completeness in Jesus. All men in these first stages of experience, passing from nature to grace, do not take equal number of steps, nor possess the same degree of sensibility. With confidence may we say, many a weary step did *Saul of Tarsus* take in the travel of his soul, from the moment when Jesus met him on the

way, until he was assured that *he was a chosen vessel*. But no sooner was *Lydia's* heart opened, than with easy steps she embraced her Saviour, and moved forward in sweet obedience. Thus, *as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God*. And such often look back to review the state of ignorance and guilt from which they have been called, and are astonished at the change. Although they may not know the number of steps they have taken, nor remember the day and the spot when they commenced their journey; yet they are certain such a change is wrought, which none but God could possibly perform; and thus go on from strength to strength, praising the wonders of redeeming grace.—If we follow the Christian, and mark his future steps, it cannot but afford us pleasure to behold him exchanging the conversation of a vain world for the company of the righteous, like the worshippers in Jerusalem going up the stairs of the temple, from strength to strength, until each in public solemn profession appears in Zion before God.—We see him advance, step by step, in a persuasion of the authenticity, variety, history, doctrine, precept, promise, and preciousness of the Bible.—To which we may add the several stages of human life, *babes, children, young men, fathers in Christ*, each are expressive of the believer's growth in grace and perseverance, until he takes his last step out of time into eternity.

3. Taking another glance at our text, by going from *strength to strength* must evidently imply *difficulties* surmounted. None that ever were called to march the Christian road to glory, but, more or less, found evils in the way, which incessantly demanded the exercise of faith, patience, and self-denial. The souls of the Israelites in

the wilderness were much discouraged because of the way. The very persons described in this Psalm were said *to go through the valley of Beca*; the name of which is derived from an Hebrew verb, which signifies "to weep." What, indeed, is this present life but a valley of tears? The naturalist may attempt to name every thorn and every briar that grows, in consequence of God's curse upon our earth for the sin of man; but, it is utterly impossible to estimate the variety and number of personal and social afflictions which are justly entailed upon our fallen race. Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. But a still greater portion of these never fail to attend those who are born again of the Spirit. Some persons sink deeper in the mire, and are wounded with the thorns of the wilderness more than others, and thus find more abundant cause *to sow in tears*. Paul was a great sufferer by land and by sea, from the hand of enraged enemies, and from the treachery of false brethren; but these, with numberless other external sorrows, he sustained with calmness, saying, *None of these things move me*. But, when he was made to grapple with the hidden evils of his heart, he exclaimed with tears, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* Still farther we have to say, that to a believer in Christ, the hidings of God's countenance is a greater source of sorrow than every thing else that may be named. While God shines, the greatest burden feels light; but when his smiles are withdrawn, nothing can satisfy and relieve the heart. Under such painful exercises, how many excellent persons have cried, *Why hidest thou thy face in time of trouble? Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Will he be favourable no more? My tears have been my drink*



*day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is now thy God?—If, my brethren, we contemplate the earth we inhabit, revolving upon its axis; if we reflect upon the order and course of the celestial bodies, producing the unerring seasons of the year, may we not stand astonished at the vast power that has maintained them for so many ages? But with still greater wonder may we behold an immortal soul in a vile body, sinful dust and ashes, helpless as infancy, incessantly surrounded with affliction and opposed by the malice of hell: that such a person, so circumstanced, should advance from strength to strength in the fear of God, and in the practice of virtue, until the end of his race shall be crowned with glory! How this is accomplished, the Gospel informs us; and with a short explanation of this secret spring of persevering grace, we shall close this discourse.*

4. One text is full in point, were we to cite no more. *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.* Here we rest; by the strong arm of this Jesus we may go on from strength to strength, and every believer may say, *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.*—The Bible opens to us the several springs from whence a believing soul pursues his way, and obtains a glorious end. The everlasting love and counsel of the Father, and his adopting grace;—the perfection of the Person and work of Jesus;—the operation of the Holy Ghost;—the unchangeable promise of Jéhovah;—a union with Jesus as husband, head, and Lord of his Church;—all these, in faithfulness, love, and power, have been verified in the actual perseverance and triumphant death of a multitude that no man can number. These are grounds on which



we rest, and whence we draw strength equal to our day. *If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?* But happy for us, *the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but God hath declared he will not take his loving-kindness from us, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail.* Solid hope. Ah, whither else should we go? Here let us rest; on this foundation let us raise the superstructure of present peace and of future glory. Nothing in ourselves, let us look for all in Jesus. Here is happiness, sweet blessedness without alloy; which, instead of failing, shall make us a soft pillow in death, and aid us to realize the glory of eternity! Thus, so far from losing strength, or reflecting upon a disappointing God, we shall be carried through every storm, as on eagle's wings, and prove to all around that there is no strange God with us. The Lord our God shall deliver us from every evil work, and will preserve us unto his everlasting kingdom, to glorify his grace for evermore! Happy will it be for you who now hear me, if you can witness to God's gracious care of you to this hour. A due consciousness of this will yield a thousand sweet emotions of heart, and draw forth your faith to that Saviour who hath promised *never to leave nor forsake you.* Whatever dark or thorny paths may yet be left before you to tread, the Lord will direct your steps, refresh you by the way, and eventually receive you home to endless joy. I thus congratulate you on your way to the CELESTIAL ZION, and hope to meet you, and sing the praises of redeeming, persevering grace for ever!

Although some may be disposed to call in question what is generally termed "The perseverance of the saints," I never yet heard of any professed Christian who doubted the awful consequences that attend the sinner who per-

severes in transgression. Sin is of an hardening nature, grows in strength with our years, and bears the most baneful fruit of sorrow. Intoxication, falsehood, theft, and a long list of other vices which might be named, seldom attain maturity in a day. Vice has its bud, and its flower, as well as its fruit. And where these spring forth in youth, the habits are so strong, unless grace prevent, that they will go on from strength to strength, until body and soul are brought to destruction. Beware, therefore, of the first enticements to evil. Many, by yielding to private sin, have been found capable of committing public crimes with impunity. May the Lord grant you pardon and restoring grace, that iniquity be not your ruin. May you possess that life-giving power of Jesus, which shall enable you to enter upon a new course, attended with the most sublime moral pleasures, and prepare you for immortal bliss!

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## LECTURE XL.

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### *THE SAVIOUR'S RESOLUTION TO DRINK THE CUP.*

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JOHN xviii. 11.

*The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not  
drink it ?*

Thus did the Father's grace ordain,  
The sacred Three agreed,  
For man salvation to obtain,  
The Son himself should bleed.

What words can show the flaming love  
With which he took the cup !  
What tongue can tell the pains of hell  
He felt to drink it up !

*Wallis.*

EVERY portion of the sufferings of Jesus Christ has a particular claim to our most solemn attention. They not only make a material part of our ransom, but lie at the foundation of our peace, and form a stimulus to our obedience. Besides, the sorrows of our Lord address the finer feelings of our souls: we cannot read them aright without repentance for our transgressions, and gratitude for his unbounded love in dying for us. I now claim your attention to the Saviour's resolution to drink the cup his Father gave him; which comprehends the fulness of his sorrows. May our hearts be duly prepared to receive impressions corresponding with the solemn subject ! The words of our text were addressed by our Lord to Peter at the gate of Gethsemane's garden. After he had revived through the ministry of an Angel, from his agony when the cup of indignation was presented to him, he was met by a band of soldiers, conducted by

Judas, who waited to drag him before the high priest, Peter, with his usual warmth of zeal, drew his sword, and cut off the ear of the servant of the priest. Jesus rebuked him, saying, *Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?—* I shall attempt to make some estimate of the CONTENTS of the Saviour's cup; and explain the PRINCIPLES on which his resolution to drink it was founded.

1. THE CUP. Perhaps this metaphorical expression is to teach us the perfection of the justice of God. As a cup contains the exact quantity of liquor for which it was intended, so the cup of sorrow apportioned to Christ was, in wisdom and justice, corresponding with the demerit of sin due to his people for their transgressions. Not a single drop, more or less, of the wrath of God formed that bitter portion than was absolutely necessary to accomplish redemption. God's displeasure against sin, under the emblem of a cup, was well understood in the Old Testament; a recollection of which will aid our reflection on the cup of the Saviour's sufferings. It was called *a cup of trembling; the cup of his indignation, and of his fury.—Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.* These passages describe, in solemn language, the incensed justice of Jehovah, and the nature of the punishment due to transgressors. Now, as we are all sinners, by nature and by practice, we, in common with the rest of mankind, are justly deserving to drink of this tremendous cup! In order to make a proper estimate of the contents of the bitter cup drank by the Son of God, it is necessary we should form some correct ideas of the demerit of sin. One remarkable text I shall therefore cite, which is perhaps the most

solemn and instructive on our present inquiry. It is the seventy-fifth Psalm, and the eighth verse. *In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.* While I solicit your most serious attention, I will offer you such observations upon it as have been the result of deliberate reflection.—This *cup*, I presume, contains the portion of wrath justly due to every individual of the whole mass of mankind without exception. This cup is *in the hand of the Lord*, who is the great administrator of his own eternal justice. The contents of the cup are described in language at once the most easy to be understood, and the most dreadful that can be conceived! It is *wine*, which, when drank to excess, intoxicates and enervates. It is *red*, the colour of blood, fiery and vindictive, to teach us that our blood, our very lives, are justly forfeited by sin. *It is full of mixture.* The holiness, the truth, the justice, and the power of God are displayed in the wrath which it contains. The punishment of sin by sense, by loss of body, and of soul; the multiplied evils of this life, and the miseries of futurity, mixed in proportion to every human being's deserts, whether male or female, young or old, ignorant or learned, rich or poor:—This awful cup of trembling and of fury is in the hand of the great God who made us, to whom we are accountable, and against whom we have sinned in ten thousand ways. Under a sense of this, may we not deeply exclaim—"O God! how terrible art thou in thy judgments! we have merited this dreadful cup of wrath from thine hand; and heaven and earth approve thy vengeance just!"—The next part of the verse now calls up your eager attention. It is said,



*He poureth out of the same.* Ah! my fellow sinners, whither can Jehovah pour out of his eup of wrath, so that we might not drink thereof and perish for ever? It is with solemn joy I inform you, Jehovah the Father poured out a determined portion of this vast cup, which was put into the hand of his Son Jesus to drink, that we might live! Here, then, learn from whence and how the Saviour's cup was formed, and stand astonished at the mercy, the justice, and the grandeur of the Lord.—The last member of this remarkable text is likewise solemn. *But the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out and drink them.* The wicked, the finally impenitent and unbelieving, must unavoidably receive the just recompence due to their offences. See, now, my hearers, you must either be indebted to an interest in Christ, who drank the bitter cup in favour of his people; or you yourselves must, eventually, wring out the dregs of the cup of vengeance from the hand of God. There is no alternative. David, as a necessary conclusion upon this solemn subject, said, in the very next verse, *I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.* O that we may possess proportionate reverence of the justice and mercy of God!

From the observations already made, you may form some small conception of the contents of Christ's bitter cup. However, to aid your reflections upon the subject, I shall add a few more observations. *The wages of sin is death*; death, in every possible form the Scriptures describe, or the powers of the mind can conceive. Who can number the sins of one man, or make a statement of the aggravated circumstances which attend them in thought, in heart, and in life? If *one* sin merits death, how dreadful is the punishment due to one sinner! Let

every sinner duly reflect on this. Now, Christ died *for a number that no man can number*; of course he must suffer the full punishment due to the individuals of that number, in order to redeem them from the curse of the law which they had incurred. Were it possible for you to collect the miseries of human life, and all the horrible torments we justly merit for our sins; the loss of the sensible presence of God, the anguish of souls, and the weight of punishment; all this would assist you to look into the dreadful cup of the Lord Jesus. How many deaths! What extremity of anguish! Not a grain of the bitter wormwood and gall omitted! And if a *sight* of this cup, in the garden of Gethsemane, produced strong cries, and tears, and sweat, and blood from the blessed Saviour, what must have been its bitter contents! and how inconceivably dreadful was that anguish, when he actually drank it upon the cross! Ah! my fellow sinners, how little do we know of the evil and demerit of sin, and the sufferings of the Son of God! May a suitable impression of both be produced upon our hearts, and be influential in every part of our conduct. Let us, then

2. Explain the PRINCIPLES on which the resolution of Christ to drink the cup was founded.—This, generally, was resolved into the will of his Father. *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* To *give* and to *receive* imply mutual complacency. There was no arbitrary restraint laid upon Christ. The Father freely gave the cup into the hand of his Son; therefore it is said, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him*. And, on the part of Christ, there needs no proof but that his whole life was absorbed in the love and will of his Father. He, therefore, said of the cup, *Shall I not drink it?* Every

consideration failed ; love of ease or life, when the will and the gift of the Father were concerned. Here we might pause, and stand astonished at the transactions between the Father and the Son to produce the redemption of sinners ! Here, in the most august manner, mercy and truth are met together ; righteousness and peace embrace each other, demanding our most ardent praise.

The gift of this cup by the Father to the Son includes some of the most important and interesting subjects that can possibly be named. The Saviour's drinking the cup was the confirmation of the eternal decree of Jehovah ; *for he was delivered by the determinate council and fore-knowledge of God.* It answered the predictions of the Old Testament, *Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.*—To drink this cup was absolutely necessary to redeem his bride the Church ; for, *he hath redeemed us to God by his blood.*—Without drinking this cup by the way, Jesus could not have passed into the mansions of bliss ; for, *ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and then to enter into his glory ?*—Nay more, unless he had drank the bitter portion he could not possibly have put into our hands *the cup of salvation.* Take these great things into consideration whenever you read our text—*Shall I not drink it ?* “ Yes, blessed Lord, for thereby every valuable design is accomplished, the divine perfections are displayed, sinners are saved, and a crown of glory placed upon thine own head ! ”

After endeavouring to show you, in some small degree, the Contents of the Saviour's bitter cup, and the principles on which he drank it, I shall now most affectionately ask every one of this family, What are your thoughts and exercises upon the subject ? To contemplate the Saviour's sufferings is unquestionably right ; but to feel

their virtue can alone be interesting. You will not value the cup of salvation until you know your desert of the cup of indignation. When this is the case, no subject will make impressions upon you equal to your Saviour's agony. While it assures you of a complete irrevocable salvation, it will influence you to every good word and work. I hope some of you have obtained an appropriating faith to know that Jesus drank the cup for you; and as one expression of your gratitude, you visit the table of the Lord in his Church, and take the cup of communion in his blood.—As you are incessantly exposed to afflictions, I wish you to learn a lesson of instruction from your Saviour's resolution to drink his cup. Every child of God has a cup of affliction appointed him to drink; but, it is of a very different kind to that which Jesus drank for his sake. His was all wrath; yours is all love. His was from the hand of justice; yours from the hand of mercy, and only intended as medicinal, to correct your depraved appetites, and habitually to prepare you for heaven. Under all the temporal afflictions you experience, as a disciple of Christ, it is your duty and your privilege to say, The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? When surrounded with afflictions, remember, *the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.* That was Joseph's cup, put there at his order; and though at the moment it was to Benjamine a cup of sorrow, it was designed as the means to bring him back to Joseph, to enjoy the sweets of fraternal embrace. For the same purpose the cup of affliction is found with you, that it may lead you to the charming manifestations of your heavenly Saviour. To him, therefore, who drank the bitter cup for us and redeemed us to God by his blood,—to him be ascribed, by all on earth, and by all in heaven, everlasting glory and praise.



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## LECTURE XLI.

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### HEAVENLY ARITHMETIC.

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PSALM xc. 12.

*So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our  
hearts unto wisdom.*

God of eternity, from thee  
Did infant-time his being draw;  
Moments and days, and months and years  
Revolve by thine unvaried law.

Great Source of Wisdom, teach my heart  
To know the price of every hour;  
That time may bear me unto joys  
Beyond its measure, and its power.  
*Doddridge.*

TO estimate and improve our fleeting days should be our constant employ as rational beings. In this, however, we wilfully fail, and need the light of life from Christ to shine upon our minds, to teach us this heavenly and important Arithmetic. "Shine, therefore, O thou fountain of light, upon our souls ! Chase the darkness from our eyes, and lead us safe through all our days, and months, and years, to the mansions of eternal bliss." As the merchant would omit no day in the use of his day-book, nor allow himself to begin a new year without adjusting the accounts of the old, so neither should we intentionally omit a day's examination, especially on a birth-day, or a New-year's-day. May we therefore employ ourselves in a review of our days and years past, for the important purposes of improvement in faith, obedience, and spiritual happiness.

1. Let us now sit down to number the days of our NATURAL YOUTH. Not so much the period of sixteen or



twenty years, as the circumstances which have attended them. Our exposure to temptation; recovery from sickness; the errors of our hearts; our deliverance from dangers; our periods of education; the affection of our parents; these, and many other scenes of youthful life should carefully and frequently be reviewed. By this we may preserve, as it were, a map of our lives, and be led to admire the goodness and the mercy of God, who hath been the guardian of our youth, and is still the strength of our years.—The days of our SPIRITUAL YOUTH. Merciful indeed that we have such days to number! that ever we should *be born again*; be delivered from that state of corruption and iniquity in which we were naturally born into the world; and in which we must have lived, died, and perished for ever, if grace had not produced the change. Happy the time, when, like Ephraim, the Lord *took us by the hand, and taught us to go*. Our first views of ourselves, the law, sin, and of Christ in all the riches of his grace, and in the inestimable sweetness of his love; these cannot be forgotten. What animated communion we then enjoyed with God! how precious the truths, the history, the promises, the precepts of the word of Christ! what zeal actuated our steps in the path of duty, and made our lips with pleasure to commend the Redeemer of our souls, to every companion, and in every circle! Happy days! how sweet their memory still! O let us, blessed Lord, increase in love to thee as we advance in years; and every fleeting day bear some new honour to thy precious name!—It is necessary also for us to number the DAYS OF OUR ERRORS, DISOBEDIENCE, AND DEPARTURE FROM GOD. O that I could omit this black list! Here are days to be remembered with tears. One would think it impossible, that persons who have

experienced so much mercy, goodness, love, and grace from God, should ever have a disobedient day to record ! But, alas ! it is too true. How often, against the convictions of conscience, the light of grace, the most solemn resolutions, and the warnings of former miscarriages, have we sinned in thought, in word, and in life ! Our backslidings have been as atrocious as they have been innumerable. And it is only owing to the compassions, the grace, and the covenant of God in Christ, that our souls have been restored to the joys of salvation, and that we continue until this day.—The DAYS OF OUR ADVERSITY may next be named. For, surely, our backslidings are generally the root of our sufferings. There is, therefore, a need's-be for them. And when we attempt to review those dark days, O how dreadful they appear ! some by sickness and pain ; others, by thwarts of providence in our views, wishes, and callings of life. Some through the powers of Satan in hellish temptations within the circle of our own breast ; others from near connections in families, and in the Church of God. No sweet without its bitter ; no fragrant rose without its attendant thorn ! With David we may say, *Thou hast showed me great and sore troubles*. Yet, the whole have been in just weight and measure ; not a grain more of the bitter wormwood and gall than was absolutely necessary ; and the fruit of all was, to take away sin, as medicine is in the hand of a faithful physician, or the rod in the hand of an affectionate parent.—But, amidst all, let us not forget to number the DAYS OF OUR SPIRITUAL REVIVALS. These may have been in our closets ; under the preaching of the word ; in the fellowship of saints ; and at the administration of ordinances. In these God hath been pleased frequently to lift up the light of his countenance.

upon us, to alleviate our sorrows, and afford us a day of rest and joy ! Thus, *before we were aware, our souls were made like the chariots of Amminadib*. Our mountain was made so strong, we said, it shall never be moved. Some such days, however few, we have certainly more or less enjoyed. They were to us days of richest mercy ; for surely we merited them not. For the most part they were like the breaking forth of the sun in its brightness, after a day of blackness and tempest. Blessed be the Lord our God, for granting us a little revival in our bondage, and preparing a table of delicious refreshments in our passage through this wilderness of woe, in prospect of immortal joys !

2. Under the review of our natural and spiritual youth, our days of error, of affliction, and of visitations with the presence of God, what salutary influence should they produce ? What now becomes our obvious duty ? Our text informs us, *to apply our hearts unto wisdom*. Christ is the wisdom of God ; and surely the review of our sinful and truly imperfect days should teach us to apply our hearts unto him, that we may be pardoned in his blood, accepted in his righteousness, and have our standing alone in the merit and riches of his grace. No less should we apply to Christ, the fountain of wisdom, in humble gratitude for the teachings already received, and to solicit a continued increase of them, to direct us in our remaining paths in honour and in usefulness.

But, by an application to *wisdom*, we may also understand that virtue, prudence, fortitude, holiness, which may, perhaps, be set in opposition to our former ignorance and many errors. Thus, *the wise in heart shall see God. The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*. How necessary

then is it that we should number our days in such an advantageous manner, as to correct our errors in judgment and practice; to pursue those paths which produce more abundant happiness to our own souls, be more useful to society, and bring more honour to that blessed Saviour whose we are, and whom we wish to serve? Thus, when we come to the day of our death, we shall assuredly find the advantages by this enumeration of our days. Composure will attend our minds; we shall not be at a loss for evidence that God hath been our guide; and that he will still be our never-failing support. Besides, the improvement of time will familiarize eternity to our minds, and increase in us an ardent desire to be transmitted to that state of perfect blessedness, where days, and months, and years are known no more!—Here I will introduce a few appropriate observations made by Bishop Beveridge, in his *Thesaurus Theologicus*, upon our text. He enforces the duty of numbering our days from the five principal rules of arithmetic. “**ADDITION**: Add each day to the number of your graces, and to the degrees of each grace. **SUBTRACTION**: Subtract from the sins of your souls, and from the strength of your sins. **MULTIPLICATION**: Multiply your thoughts of God, your desires of heaven, and your endeavours after holiness. **DIVISION**: Divide all your days into special and common; each day between your general and particular calling. **THE RULE OF PROPORTION**: Proportion, the repentance of each day to your sins; and your thankfulness to your mercies.”

Suffer me now to conclude by urging you to the consideration of estimating your time, in order to your entrance into an eternal world. The merchant failing by neglect of his accounts, and the mariner who seldom examines



his chart until he falls upon a rock, are equally chargeable with folly. How much more criminal are those who pass over the diversified scenes of life, rush into numberless temptations, share in the bounties of providence, or drink of the cup of sorrow, and yet, heedlessly pass down the stream of life, insensible of their accountability to the judgment of the great God! How necessary is it for each of you who now hear me, to ask, Has this been, and is it still my folly? Have I neglected the review of my life, and let my days and years past heedlessly away? With all my acquirements, have I applied my heart unto that wisdom, which shall prepare me in peace for my latter end? If not, to what good purpose have you lived for yourselves? You are utterly uncertain what shall be your journey's end. As a traveller, who shall soon pass the gates of death to an eternal state, how important is it for you to know that your iniquities are pardoned; that God accepts your person; and that you shall be received to mansions of eternal joy? Without some degree of this knowledge, it is impossible you should possess true peace of conscience, or taste the cup of real pleasure. Go then, my fellow sinners, go to Jesus just as you are, for he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. Although to this moment you may have lived sinful and thoughtless, it is your consolation that there is no instance which can be produced that Jesus ever rejected the penitent's cry. So far from it, there is a sacred direction exactly suited to relieve your fears. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not.* What more can you wish? Here is wisdom opposed to your folly, and adequate to guide your feet into the paths of peace. Accept my ardent wish, that you may be drawn by the



cords of redeeming love to the throne of grace. May you be made wise unto salvation, and your future days, and months, and years, be attended with that felicity which can only be exceeded by the eternal fruition of God in glory !

You who profess to be Christians should be most competent to estimate the value of *time* ; and learn so to proportion it to private and public duties, that you may fill up every day with pleasure to yourselves and usefulness to others. Much of the comfort and interest of a family depends upon a proper appropriation of time. You may have lost too much of your precious time already ; and have made too injudicious an application of it. Learn, therefore, to apply your heart unto wisdom, and redeem the time, knowing the days are evil. Omit no opportunity for doing good. And as to future events, whether prosperous or afflictive, and even the period designed for your death, say with David, *Lord, my times are in thine hand ; thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.*

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## LECTURE XLII.

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### *A COMMENT ON EZEKIEL'S VISION OF DRY BONES, ILLUSTRATING THE CONVERSION OF SINNERS.*

EZEKIEL xxxvii. 1—10.

*The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about : and, behold, there were very many in the open valley ; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live ? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones ; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live : And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live ; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded ; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above ; but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind. prophecy, Son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God ; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live. So I pre-*

*phesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.*

THIS was a very singular vision to Ezekiel. By reading from the 11th to the 14th verse, you will find its application to the restoration of the captive Jews in Babylon. As we are assured that *there is no Scripture of any private interpretation*, many excellent Expositors have considered this vision as designed to instruct us in the nature of the resurrection of the dead at the last day. But I presume it is equally calculated to teach us the natural state of mankind, the efficient, and the instrumental causes of their restoration, with the end for which the whole is designed. It is in this point of view I purpose to offer you an exposition. In order to render it more intelligible and impressive, you will bear in mind, that the state of sinners is represented under the emblem of exceeding dry bones in the open valley.—The efficient cause of their return to life is the Spirit of God;—the instrumental cause is the ministry of God's word;—the design is that they might know the Lord. While I endeavour to explain this vision as illustrating the exceeding power and riches of grace in the conversion of sinners, my prayer is, that all of us may read our personal interest in the subject.

Verse 1. *The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones.* This verse shows us the qualification of the prophet, and the work to which he was called; the whole, he assures us, was *by the Spirit of the Lord*. The hand of the Lord upon him was a token of his election to his office, and

the power with which he should be endowed for the discharge of his duty. In the same manner the hand of the Lord was with his disciples, and by their preaching many believed and turned to the Lord. This power is absolutely necessary to accompany all, in every age, whom the Lord will bless for the conversion of sinners. The Spirit of the Lord gave the prophet a general view of a valley full of dry bones. These were to be the subjects of his operation, and very analogous to the commission of the disciples of Jesus, who were to go out into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. No image could be stronger to express the condition of fallen man than these dry bones in the open field. Let us examine its propriety. These bones had a pre-existence in animal life. So had all mankind in our first parent Adam, and in him all have died a moral death. Or, in other words, *by one man's disobedience many were made sinners.*—Dry bones are incapable of motion: it is equally so with men dead in sin; they have no communion with God. The understanding is darkened, the will perverted, and the affections polluted, so that sinners have no more desire nor power to exercise spiritual life, than dry bones have for natural life.—Dry bones are unsusceptible of feeling. And the Scriptures assure us, that mankind, as sinners, *are fast feeling*; for, let the letter of the law, or the blessings of the Gospel be preached, unassisted by the Spirit, they make no impression. And although Providence bestows his bounties, or visits with affliction, it may be truly said, *This people turn not to him that smiteth them, neither do they fear the Lord of hosts.*—Dry bones have no power to quicken themselves; the God that made them must revive them, or they must still remain under the power of death. Equally so mankind, dead in law and dead in sin, have

not the powers of spiritual life. This description of our fallen race is confessedly very humiliating to our carnal pride; but it is certainly consonant to Scripture and positive fact; and happy are you who have been, by grace, brought to know and to feel it. As in this verse the prophet was directed to take a general view of the dry bones in the open valley, in the next he receives a command to make a more special and particular examination of them.

Verse 2. *And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.* The intention of which was, that the mind and the heart of the prophet might be duly informed of their number and their state. Ezekiel was not a silent, inattentive observer. With astonishment he informs us of their vast number, their exposure in the open valley, and the very inert state to which they were reduced. *Lo*, says he, *they were very dry.* This last description of the bones is truly affecting! They had been long in a state of death, and entirely destitute of moisture; the shape remained, but they were so extremely dry, that by the least touch they would crumble into dust. To have this view of human nature, deplorable and lost in itself, is as indispensably necessary to every Minister of the Gospel, as it was to Ezekiel to see these very dry bones; and whenever such knowledge is attained, it prepares the mind for an audience with God, which is expressed in the next verse.

Verse 3. *And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? and I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.*—The Lord's question to the prophet—*Can these bones live?* As if the Lord had said, "Is there any natural power by which they may be raised to life? Is it possible



for human eloquence to arouse them?" Ezekiel knew it was impossible. He had stood in the midst of them, and had gone round about them, and was thoroughly convinced that nothing short of "the power that made them could raise them from death to life. Such a view of sinful mankind, and a deep consciousness of their relief being utterly out of all human reach, are absolutely necessary to be possessed by every man whom the Lord calls to the labour of the Gospel; so that both instrument and sinners may give glory to the Lord for conversion. Ezekiel, therefore, in humility, referred to the Almighty: *O Lord God, thou knowest*; that is, "thou knowest, that as dead in sin, they are dead beneath the sentence of thy law. Thou only who canst raise the ruins of the body, can alone quicken the souls of men. Although thy violated law binds them in death, and forbids them to arise, thy wisdom and power are infinite to devise and to execute the work, and make thyself known as *a just God, and yet a Saviour.*" Glory be to God, that in Christ such a revelation is made by the Gospel. Jesus is able to save the chief of sinners. He that died on the cross to satisfy provoked justice, sends down his Spirit to quicken those who are dead in trespasses and in sin. The usual mean by which this great work is effected under the administration of the Spirit, is the preaching of the word. The Lord gives spiritual life to those whom he will constitute his Ministers, and then sends them forth amongst a world of sinners to accomplish the design of their conversion. The Lord's orders, and the effects that follow the execution of them, are contained in the next three verses.

Verse 4, 5, 6. *Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these*

*bones ; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live : And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live ; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.*

This was Ezekiel's commission, to preach to an heap of dry bones. It was to be executed by preaching, not what the prophet or the schools of philosophy might dictate, but *the word of the Lord*. The effects which most certainly follow are, restoration to life, and the knowledge of the Lord ; comprehending, no doubt, all that is necessary to human happiness.

To any but a man of God, this order would have been received with a remonstrance. Carnal reason would have replied, " Lord, shall I not expose myself to censure for opening my lips to speak to a valley of dry bones, perfectly inanimate ? Will not all around laugh me to scorn, while I pronounce them dead in sin, as are the bones of men long dead, lying mouldering in the open valley ? That I should call upon such to hear the word of the Lord, and tell them that the Lord would gather them as perfect as the human structure, and cause them to live and know the Lord ? Would not such a procedure commit my reason to reflection, and expose me to the censure of insanity ?" But the faith which God communicates to the mind, overcomes all seeming impossibilities, and hazards all carnal reflection. The command was of God. Preaching to these dry bones was the appointed *mean* to accomplish the *end* of their restoration. And this simple consideration keeps Ministers in their proper place, when they preach to sinners, and, at the same time, clothes them with humility. If any good is done ; if any sinners hear and live ; it is en-

tirely owing to the power of the Spirit accompanying their labours. Thus, as Paul expresses it, *the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us*. With such persuasion, Ezekiel consulted not flesh and blood, but immediately he arose and obeyed the command of the Lord: the success of which is so strikingly related in the two following verses, we will proceed to give them our most serious attention.

Verse 7, 8. *So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.*

*So I prophesied as I was commanded.* Faith and obedience are inseparably connected in the servants of God; and their Lord assuredly crowns their labours with success. Astonishingly great was the consequence of the prophet's address to the dry bones! A noise was heard;—a shaking was produced;—bones came together;—and the animal body received a perfect form. These, under the most expressive emblems, teach us the work of God, in raising sinners dead in sin to newness of life. Let us examine each in that order which the text observes.—*As I prophesied there was a noise, or voice*, as the Hebrew word signifies. This, no doubt, was the voice of God. It was the voice of God which brought Adam to a sense of his disobedience; and the same life-giving power is as necessary for us; for, without it the voice of nature and of reason would be ineffectual. In the dispensation of his providence, and in the demands of his law, God's voice is heard with terrible majesty, demanding of sinners perfect, personal, and perpetual obe-

dience. Those who hear this voice, are brought to a deep sensibility of their transgressions, and, like Adam, exclaim, *I heard thy voice, and I was afraid*. So in the resurrection of the dry bones, for, after the voice, *behold, a shaking*. The Hebrew word we render *shaking*, is the same which, in other parts of Scripture, is used to signify an earthquake; which is the most terrible convulsion of nature. See Amos i. 1. Zechariah xiv. 5. An effect similar to this is produced in the hearts of sinners, when God speaks to their conscience. Like the earthquake on the crucifixion of Christ, the rocky heart is shivered; the veil of ignorance which long hung over the mind is rent in twain; and the souls of sinners, having laid long dead in the graves of iniquity, come forth to active life. Doth the earth tremble, and are its bowels thrown into convulsion by the kindling of the sulphureous particles it contains? Equally so, at the voice of God, the sin, guilt, and corruption of the heart are discovered; which produce the most painful sensations, and make us cry aloud for mercy! Thus, *by the law is the knowledge of sin*. But, permit me to say, if the voice of God was not heard in other accents, despair would immediately follow. How sweet and charming the voice of Emmanuel! Those lips which brought Lazarus from the tomb, speak pardon and peace to the most guilty breast, and bring the powers of the soul into harmony and love. Thus, after the shaking, *bone came together, bone to his bone*. Bones give stability and solidity to the body; serve for locomotion, and defence of vital parts; they also give attachment to muscles, and keep them extended. By death, the bones in Ezekiel's valley were scattered in every direction; but by the commanding voice of God, bone came together; no two bodies were mingled; no one body had

the bones of a fellow creature intruded upon him, however small, or wherever dispersed; bone, however dry, came to his bone, and formed the perfect skeleton of man. Great God! by this miraculous and astonishing display of thy wisdom and power, teach us to adore thine infinite glory! These bones of the animal body show us the faculties of the soul, understanding, judgment, will, affections. These powers, though they have an existence in the souls of sinners, are, like the dry bones, scattered abroad, and are as morally inactive toward God, as dry bones naturally are to the offices of animal life. By the regenerating Spirit of Christ these powers are restored; the understanding is illuminated; a right judgment on truth is created; an obedient will is formed in this day of God's power; the affections are sublimely sanctified, so as to love the Lord with all the heart, and with all the soul. As one bone is dependant upon another, and as in Ezekiel's vision, every bone was brought to its place and station, so the powers of the soul have a charming relation, and a dependance upon each other to constitute the strength and beauty of the man. To follow the order of the vision, we must also add, that as bones without aid cannot preserve union with each other in regular motion, so neither can the powers of the soul. The prophet, therefore, informs us,—*And lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them.* Sinew, or ligament, is that part of an animal body which serves to unite and keep in proper place the articulated bones, as well as to bind down the tendons of muscles, to prevent them from starting during action; they are fibrous in their texture, of a white and shining appearance, and perfectly inelastic. The sinew, therefore, of the body, is like faith to the soul. *We walk by faith.* It is a grace, or production of the Spirit,



which unites and preserves in motion all the powers of the soul. As the bones of the skeleton in Ezekiel's vision would have been utterly incapable of action without sinews or ligaments to preserve them, so, without faith, our souls could not walk with God, or run the way of his commandments.—*Flesh also came upon the bones.* Flesh or muscle is that massy part of a human body which gives shape and figure to the whole. It is soft and fibrous in its texture, and of a red colour, capable of contraction by the application of stimuli, or determination of the will, and serves as moving powers to the machine. This is like that tender heart of flesh which the Lord promised to Ezekiel, or to that renewed conscience sprinkled by the blood of Christ, which is susceptible of divine impressions.—Next we are informed, *Skin covered them above.* Skin is the natural covering to the flesh, and serves as the organ of touch; it presents the human fabric as a beautiful display of the Creator's wisdom and power. Like the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is unto all, and upon all them that believe; in it both the persons and services of Christians are accepted. And as the skin of the body covers every part, that not a particle is left exposed, so the righteousness of Jesus is admirably perfect to cover our souls, if I may so say, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. Thus saith the Lord, *Thou art comely, through the comeliness which I have put upon thee.* As the skin serves for the organ of touch to the whole body, I may confidently affirm, that our belief and possession of the complete righteousness of Jesus is the grand criterion of interest in grace. As Luther said, "Upon the doctrine of justification, by faith, in the righteousness of Christ, every thing else in religion depends;" so, certain I am, that every

man of grace will as cheerfully say, he is as much indebted to God for providing and applying the righteousness of Christ to his soul, as he is for the covering of his body with skin.—On each part of these two verses, I could willingly have expatiated more largely; but as this lecture is likely to extend very far beyond our intended limits, I shall hasten to the last clause, which inform us, that notwithstanding such an astonishing display of divine power in raising the dry bones, there was one remarkable deficiency—*There was no breath in them.* On this clause I shall only say, that the case is evangelically illustrated in the conversion of Paul, who was several days after the Lord brought him to a conviction of his guilt, before he experienced the felicity of knowing he was a chosen vessel of the Lord. Indeed, it is a common case. Many are under the converting power of God, but, as yet, they enjoy not an assurance of salvation. The only remedy for which is explained in the next verse.

Verse 9. *Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, Son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.* Wind, air, breath, are Scripture terms characteristic of the HOLY SPIRIT, who is the communicator and preserver of spiritual life to the souls of men. Its proceeding from the four quarters denotes the immensity, power, and sufficiency of the Spirit. The prophet being commanded to pray for the Spirit to enliven the raised bodies, should teach both Ministers and people how much we depend on the continued influence of the Spirit, that we might know the Lord, and live in the comforts of religion. The longer we live the more we shall be convinced, that as without air our bodies cannot exist, so neither can our souls live

to God without the perpetual breathing of the Spirit. The answer to the prophet's prayer concludes the vision.

Verse 10. *So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.* This was a sufficient evidence of their complete restoration to life. Their martial appearance perfectly coincides with the Scripture character of every believer as *a good soldier of Jesus Christ*; and of the Church collectively, who are *terrible as an army with banners*. Christ is the Lord of hosts, the Captain of our salvation. We have numberless foes to oppose our journey to immortality. The divine Leader, on whom we depend for supply and protection, has provided *a complete suit of armour*, described in the last chapter to the Ephesians. Though often engaged with their enraged foes, they eventually overcome through the blood of the Lamb, and are transmitted to the mansions of bliss, and receive a crown of life that fadeth not away. All which is strikingly applicable to the Christian warfare.

Having now passed through our comment on the vision of bones, we might make some applicatory remarks on the wretched state of man, the interposition of divine power, and an happy restoration to the knowledge of the Lord. I hope, however, you have not been hearing the discourse without some application to yourselves. The dead bones in the open valley, exposed to storm and destruction, teach you what you were by nature. If you have passed from death unto life, you cannot but more or less know it, though probably you may not know a particular day of the Lord's power. Gratitude to God for his rich, free, almighty grace, will dwell in your hearts, and be expressed in your obedience.—You perceive that the

reason why Ministers of the Gospel preach to sinners who are dead in sin, is the command of the Lord ; and that their success, as instruments, wholly depends upon the pleasure and the power of the Almighty.—To young Ministers especially, I beg leave to recommend an attentive perusal of this very striking parable, as giving them, in my opinion, the best model for preaching to sinners. First describe the exposed, wretched, helpless, lost state of sinners ; then tell them not what they may or can do, but what the Lord is able to perform in their favour for their restoration and salvation, as did Ezekiel to the dry bones. Like him, begin this work in communion with God : go forth with boldness in his name ; address sinners as rational, though lost creatures ; and then wait, as did the prophet, for the Lord to crown your labour with success, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Thus, you will glorify God in your ministry, and be happy in yourselves.—Those who were raised to life under the ministry of Ezekiel, must have honoured the instrument for the greatness of the work ; and if you have derived advantage from the Ministers of Christ, you also will esteem them for their work sake.—Let me finally exhort you to trust to the Lord for the completion of his work with you. He who raised you from sin, will preserve you through life, deliver you from the grave in the morning of the resurrection, when this parable shall receive its final completion, and then conduct you to glory, where you will sing the praise of his grace for ever and ever.



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## LECTURE XLIII.

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### CHRIST THE BEARER OF HIS PEOPLE.

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ISAIAH xlii. 4.

*To your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will  
I carry you; I have made, and I will bear, even I  
will carry, and will deliver you.*

Surely Christ thy griefs hath borne,  
Weeping souls no longer mourn:  
View him bleeding on the tree,  
Pouring out his life for thee;  
There thy ev'ry sin he bore,  
Weeping souls lament no more.

A. M. T.

IT is an indisputable fact, that mankind are so absorbed in sin and in affliction, that unless some one competent to the task bear them up, in this life, and deliver them from the wrath to come, they must inevitably perish. Such an interposing, all-sufficient friend, nature nor reason could possibly produce. But the Bible points us to Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us, as the BEARER of the PERSONS, the NAMES, the GUILT, and the INFIRMITIES of his people. By so doing, he takes them up, carries them through life, and lands them safe in everlasting bliss. So far as the Spirit shall assist, I will in this lecture lead you to contemplate Jesus as the BEARER of our souls, with all their important concerns. I sincerely wish it may be a mean to establish your faith, and raise your hope of immortality.

1. Jesus is the BEARER of the PERSONS of his PEOPLE. The first man *Adam* bear his wife *Eve* in his own body, before she had a visible existence; and, God's



charge to Adam, to be fruitful and multiply, was given to him when as yet his wife was not actually formed. From the history of creation it may, therefore, be truly said, Adam bear his wife in his own body. Now, the Gospel informs us, that *Adam was a figure of him that was to come*, and that Christ is *the second Adam, the Lord from heaven*. Adam was first in the world of nature : Christ is first in the world of grace. The spouse of this second Adam is his Church, *chosen in him before the foundation of the world*. And as certainly as Adam bore the elect rib in his natural body, so surely doth Christ bear his elect spouse in his own person ; who is, therefore, said to be *flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone*. This subject is not named to you as a matter of indifference. It is of the highest importance. This very union between Christ and his Church is the foundation of redemption and grace : for, as Adam suffered justly for the sin of his wife, so Christ became responsible, and suffered for the sins of his bride. That Christ bears the persons of his people, is also taught us under two of the most expressive emblems.—Christ is the *foundation laid in Zion*, on which rests the whole superstructure of the Church, with all its vast and various concerns for time and eternity ; and when the building is complete, the top-stone shall be brought forth with shouting, crying, *Grace, grace unto it !*—*The vine* bears the *branches*, and is the cause of their existence, preservation, and fruitfulness. And, who that ever read the 15th chapter of John, but must clearly see, that Christ, the true Vine, bears his people, who are his branches, that they may bear fruit unto eternal life ! Both these emblems teach the precious truth, of Christ bearing his people. What is the building without a foundation ? or what is the

branch, if separated from the vine? May that adorable Spirit, who is the bond of union with Christ, make you enjoy the comfort of being built upon Christ, the life-giving rock; and, as branches of the true vine, make you abundantly fruitful!

2. Jesus bears the NAMES of his people. *They are written in the Lamb's book of life.*—By this we may assuredly conclude, their persons, birth, course of life, death, and eternal happiness, are made more certain than engraven upon mountains of brass. *I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine, saith the Lord. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.* The Lord Jesus, therefore, can never mistake the objects of his love, nor regenerate one man instead of another. No blessing, nor even a cross of affliction intended for one can possibly fall upon another. While this affords a consoling argument for those who have found grace in the sight of God, that their names are written in heaven, it should equally reconcile them to all the paths of life, however afflictive; for, the Lord is too wise to be mistaken, and too good to be unkind. How charmingly was the Hebrew nation taught this truth, when they beheld Aaron, their high Priest, bearing their names upon his breast-plate, and upon his shoulders, for a memorial before the Lord! And with what greater joy may every real Christian look to Jesus, the GREAT HIGH PRIEST of our profession, who has engraven the names of his people upon the palms of his hands, and who appears in the presence of God for us!

3. What is still more important for us to know is, that Jesus is the SIN-BEARER of his people. It is an indisputable fact, arising from the justice of God, as well as from reason, that man, as a sinner, must bear the demerit of his

own crimes, or a substitute must advance in his favour. There is no possibility of a middle state. The office of Jesus as a sin-bearer, is therefore as necessary as it is beneficial, and certainly makes a material part of the Gospel. The council of Jehovah decreed, *My righteous servant shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. He shall bear the sin of many.*—*Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.* If it be asked, How Christ became chargeable with our guilt? We reply, Not only as Christ is the Head, and justly smitten for the trespass of the members of his body; and as he is the Bridegroom, and so responsible for the debts of his bride: but, we are informed, *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* This transfer, making over, or imputing the sins of many to Jesus, is an act of God's sovereign grace; and as Jesus, God-man, had an infinity of merit, the transaction was equally righteous. Christ bore the *guilt*, the *sense*, and the *punishment* of all the sins of those for whom he died. The natural consequence of which is, the certainty of their justification, pardon, and eternal freedom. Thus, *he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, and was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* He was delivered for our offences, and arose again for our justification. This is the rock of salvation, the only foundation on which we can possibly stand before God, and raise the superstructure of our hope for immortality. Christ bore our guilt, and we bear the robe of his immaculate righteousness. He carried our sorrows, and therefore our guilty breasts bear the blessings of full pardon and divine peace! Since this

is the primary truth of revelation, and inseparably connected with the experience of salvation, no wonder it was taught by the institution of the sacrifices under the Hebrew law. The paschal Lamb, and the scape goat, clearly taught Messiah, as the sin-bearer of men, to the believing Israelites; and we look to the same divine Person as having completed his work, and now passed into heaven; there to appear in the presence of God for us. Most affectionately do I wish all who now hear me may obtain faith to *behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.* For you, in your own persons, to bear the guilt, the punishment of your numberless sins, O how dreadful the thought, how awful the consequences! Yet it must certainly be so, or Christ must bear them for you. Remember, *there is none other name by whom you can be saved.* Interested in Jesus, you have peace with God, boldness at the throne of his grace, and shall triumph in prospect of acceptance in final judgment. Possessing the least faith in this great Redeemer, we gladly unite with an honourable believer now in glory, and say—

And wast thou for transgressors given?

And did th' incarnate King of heaven

For us his foes expire?

Amaz'd, O earth, the tidings hear!

He bore, that we might never bear

The Father's righteous ire.

4. We now enter one other interesting part of the office of Jesus, as the BEARER of his people, through all the SORROWS of their lives. The journey of the Israelites is a striking emblem of the progress of Chris-



tians to the land of rest in glory. Moses declared to that people, *The Lord thy God bear thee, as a man doth bear his son.* Not an enemy, nor a slave, but a son; that is, with all tenderness, affection, and care. Be assured, that such is the love and faithfulness of the Lord to the children of his grace, that he will bear them through the sorrows of their lives, and crown them with glory. The same preservation is taught by an instance in natural history. *As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord leadeth and beareth us, to prove that there is no strange God with us.* The support of God may not be alike sensible to us, whether it be under outward afflictions or the deeper exercises of the heart. But, in the conflict, or after it, we certainly shall find that Christ, by his secret grace, hath kept us from destruction, and brought us safely through. Trust, then, the protection of the Lord. On the wings of his faithfulness and love he will assuredly bear you safely through, above the reach of every foe. It is enough that he hath said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* The words of our text are charmingly adapted to console the heart in old age. *Even to hoar hairs* the Lord hath said, *He will carry, and will deliver you.* When the aid of the most skilful physician fails, and all the charming scenes of nature vanish, the Lord will afford the most ample support and sublime joy. How adequate a Saviour, therefore, is Jesus, to bear our PERSONS, our NAMES, our SINS, and our SOULS through the sorrows of this world, the valley of death, and finally to receive us to heaven! Glory be to the Saviour! We will praise him for all that is past, and trust him for all that is to come.



5. Upon the whole, it is no wonder that we find it prophesied by Zechariah, that this Saviour *should bear the glory*. The glory of nature, providence, and grace, devolves on Christ: *For by him, and for him, were all things created*. Christ is the glory of his Church; all his ordinances, his word, and his Ministers, unite in bringing glory to the Lord Jesus. Every mercy we receive, every victory we obtain over sin, sends us with shouts of praise to our adored Emmanuel. And to which we may add, all the spirits of the just made perfect in heaven bow before the throne, and with united voices exclaim, *Unto him that washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

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## LECTURE XLIV.

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### THE CHARACTER OF A GOOD MAN.

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ACTS xi. 24.

*He was a good man.*

How happy is the *good Man's* lot,  
How free from ev'ry anxious thought,  
From worldly hope and fear!  
Confin'd to neither court nor cell,  
His soul disdains on earth to dwell,  
He only sojourns here.

J. C. W.

WITH most men, "a good man" is a vague and indefinite character, generally estimated from partiality, social connections, or misguided judgment. Indeed, every conscious man wishes to have this character decided in his own breast, that he may know the honour and the felicity connected with it. Who then shall draw the portrait? What hand shall form the lines by which we may determine for ourselves the good man's character? Let us appeal to the sacred Scriptures, which are the only standard of truth; and while we pursue that ample page, may each desire the good man's character may become his own!

Let us first examine the texture of the good man's heart, which is the fountain of action; for, if *the heart be not right with God*, the character must be base. It must be acknowledged, that man, by nature and by practice, is the very reverse of his original creation. The testimony of God is, *there is none that doeth good, no not one.* And such is the depravity of the heart, *that it is deceitful*

*above all things, and desperately wicked; that out of it proceed every evil thought, and every evil action.* If any man's heart, therefore, be made good, it must be God that makes it so. He begins what the Scriptures call *a good work in the soul*; that is, regenerates, and makes it capable, by holy principles, to perform good actions. Our Saviour, therefore, saith, *A good man out of the treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; for, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* This *treasure* can be none other than the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ; consisting of all the plenitude of grace, pardon, peace, and love from God, capable of assuring the heart of salvation, and of giving it power to perform the good and acceptable will of God. Thus the tree being made good, the fruit also will be good. Like Barnabas expressed in our text, *a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith.* This is the origin of a good man; it is a creation in Christ; and without the communication of this grace, a good education, the best example, or the most splendid profession, will leave the heart contaminated and vile. With this grace the conscience is made good; just views of God, sin, mercy, time, eternity, possess the mind. As whatever comes from God, leads to him; so the heart which is made good, possesses the warmest desires after the Saviour, the sweetest comforts in communion with God, and strives to walk humbly before him by every good word and work. If this is not the way in which the heart is made good, in vain will philosophy and the powers of reason point the path. But of this we are certain, *Paul, Zaccheus, Magdalene*, and a number which no man can estimate, of every age and clime, have proved the virtues of the grace of God, in converting them from iniquity to the

paths of truth.—Solomon gives us another part of this character. *A good man obtaineth favour of the Lord ;* and every good man knows, that God's favour is attained not by *merit* but by *grace*. It is the privilege of such a man *to walk in the light of God's countenance*. He knows that God in Christ is his Father ; that his love to him is infinitely great ; and he prays to have an abiding sense of it upon his heart under all circumstances of his life. It is his solace under every frowning providence. When his enemies become the most inveterate, grace leads him to make the highest estimate of the favour of his God, and to exclaim with David, *Thy loving-kindness is better than life, therefore my lips shall praise thee.*—Solomon gives us one other trait in this distinguished person. *A good man is satisfied from himself.* A bad man knows not the peace of a good conscience ; his breast is the receptacle of fear ; his heart is like the troubled ocean ; evil thoughts, desires and actions, can alone flow from it. At any rate, the heart that is not made good, must possess a painful uncertainty as to its present and its future happiness. But, a good man is satisfied with Christ as his Saviour ; with an hope of interest in God ; the possession of his grace ; his lot in providence ; and his hope for futurity. He is so satisfied as not to wish another Saviour, or another Master. O what pleasures must reside in such a breast ! How calm amidst the accidents of life ! a treasure to itself, and an example to others.—David likewise speaks most charmingly of the GOOD MAN, and describes the sources of his perseverance. *A good man's steps are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down : for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* It is certainly an important thing to

go on in a straight line of obedience, and hold fast an honourable profession of the Gospel to the end. Into this path many enter, rejoice for a while, and then fall away; but, saith our Lord, *He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.* Happy then for the good man, that *God ordereth his steps, and upholdeth him by the hand,* so that no weapon formed against him shall prosper. If he fall, the Lord will raise him up again, and establish his goings. Who can miscarry with such a guide? Who but must be wretched that rejects so gracious a hand?—Among the many visible traits in a good man's character, his BENEVOLENCE is not the least conspicuous. *A good man, saith the Psalmist, showeth favour, and lendeth.* Like his Lord and master, his feet go about doing good, never so happy as when employed in feeding the hungry, and wiping away the tear of sorrow. He is, indeed, a good Samaritan to the distressed, let him find such where he may; and, what is peculiar to the dictate of the Gospel, this good man is taught to *do good even to them that hate him.* The love of Christ thus constrains him, and in every instance of his kindness, the sacred glow of his soul makes an ample reward.—The Scriptures aid us to view the good man in the discharge of his temporal concerns. *He shall guide his affairs with discretion.* In his domestic and in his worldly affairs he will act with prudence and integrity. His religion, so far from teaching him to neglect his family and be indolent in business, stimulates him *to be fervent in spirit, diligent in his calling, serving the Lord.* And even in the moral government of his family, he is guided by pious discretion, never suffering the cause of his God to be grieved, either by the impropriety of his conduct, or an untempered zeal. One instance of his



parental discretion is mentioned by Solomon. *A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children*; especially if they be in an infant state. But, perhaps his best legacy will be good instruction, and a good example. —No good man in this life without his troubles, and the greatest of these arise from his own heart. *If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.* The Christian and the cross of affliction are inseparable. Indeed, we often find that the good man shines best in the furnace of affliction: bowing before the Lord, he waits patiently for deliverance, that the trial of his faith may be more precious than gold that perisheth. When the news that Eli's sons were slain reached the good man's ears, he said, *Good is the word of the Lord.*—There is no need of bringing forward more Scripture instances of good men's sufferings, for they are many. I shall, therefore, say, that in the fire of tribulation, however severe, the good man cleaves to a good God, and fails not to cry with his suffering Lord, *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*—Let us now follow the good man to the end of his race. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* Few men, good or bad, pass out of this world by death, so insensibly as not to discover their true character, and give some fore-token of their final state. Few good men bid adieu to life under so dark a cloud as not to give some evidence that the Son of righteousness hath shone upon them. —*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.* We therefore mark the good man's end; the end of his sorrows; the last of his tears; but not the end of his happiness. Peace dwells in his heart at a dying hour; and no sooner is he *absent from the body*

than he is present with his Lord in the peaceful regions of eternity, to dwell in his presence for ever !

Are the features of this man perfect ? Are there no specks nor blemishes in this good man's character ? A painter, to gratify the vanity of his employer, may collect his features from the fairest side, and by art conceal the blemished parts. But the Scriptures present us with a just description of every class of men ; and he that employs them in contemplating the character of the best and most useful men, will not find one without personal imperfection. *Moses*, the most eminent for meekness, is reproved for having once spoken unadvisedly with his lips. *David* carried a scar upon his breast with him to the grave. *John*, the most eminent for affection, fell into improper resentment, calling for fire from heaven upon some who were disobedient. *Paul* had such a view of his numberless imperfections, even at the close of his life, as to call himself *the chief of sinners*. Yet all those men, in the disposition of their hearts, the usefulness of their lives, and the devotion of their souls, have been esteemed among the best of men ; and, let me say, each of those men found the imperfections of their obedience and the evils of their hearts to form the greatest burden of sorrow which they sustained.

The enemies of Revelation may magnify the imperfections of God's servants into the most flagrant offences, and pronounce them "bad men ;" yet, let them show better from their own side ; and let such themselves, by a more virtuous life, convince mankind that the maxims of philosophy can make better men than the Gospel of the grace of God. And, should those who believe the Scripture look for good men without a blemish, let them yield a more perfect example, and profit by the failings of

others. For my part, I expect not to see a good man without spot, until the righteous are revealed with their Lord from heaven.

Having examined the texture of the good man's heart; his sensibility of divine favours; the satisfaction of his mind; the source of his perseverance; his discretion in his family; his confidence in affliction; and marked his peaceful end; what improvement shall we make of it for ourselves?

When a picture is finished, if it be a miniature, and highly esteemed, it is often worn in the breast. Let us then take the good man's likeness, and let it lie near to our hearts, and be operative in our lives. If the portrait be an whole length, and of full size, the artist is ambitious to place it where the light may direct its rays, to render its parts and beauties desirably conspicuous. If, therefore, we place the good man's picture in the light of the FAMILY, it cannot but be esteemed. If the light of ZION, the Church of God, falls upon it, it is held with a desire for imitation. Even the light of the WORLD must discover the good man's worth, and esteem him a blessing to the community. What shall we say of the light of the fire of HELL? Even by this, the good man is seen a monument of matchless grace, and as a brand plucked from the burning. But, in the LIGHT OF GOD'S COUNTENANCE he cannot fail to be seen in his true colours; for *God taketh pleasure in the work of his own hands*. And in the LIGHT OF GLORY, where no cloud floats to intercept eternal rays, there the good man shall be seen by myriads of angels, and by the spirits of the just made perfect, and there display the glory of JEHOVAH.

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## LECTURE XLV.

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### CONSOLATION FOR THE DISTRESSED.

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#### PSALM lv. 22.

*Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.*

He that has made my heaven secure  
Will here all good provide;  
While Christ is rich can I be poor,  
Who am his much-lov'd bride?

Dear Lord, I cast my care on thee,  
I triumph and adore;  
Henceforth my great concern shall be  
To love and please thee more.

*Ryland.*

IT requires but little experience to know, that in consequence of sin, human life is attended by a variety of sorrows. Every man has his own burden, properly so denominated, as the just allotment of the Almighty; and sometimes as the consequence of his own personal imprudence. Nor may it be improperly called his own, by long and painful experience. As with individuals, so with many excellent families. Like the family of Jacob, a variety of sources afford great and sore afflictions. Nor is it uncommon for such to imagine their sorrows to be greater than others. No individual, nor family, without some burden at particular seasons; and such cannot but find the value of advice to direct them to an adequate source of support and consolation. David performs this friendly office; and directs us in the words of the text, to *cast our burden upon the Lord*; with this assurance, *he will undoubtedly support us*. I presume David's direction to us is the result of his own



experience. He laboured under many a burden, and often enjoyed that relief in casting his care upon the Lord, which he could not have obtained from any other quarter. Let us first examine what may compose the burden of human life;—and then enforce the exhortation, to cast our burden upon the Lord.

1. *We that are in this tabernacle*, said Paul, *do groan, being burdened*. Diseases, pains, and infirmities are incident to our bodies; some by constitution, and others by sinful habits. Old age is a burden to itself, and experiences that pain which death alone can remove. It is not uncommon to find persons many years labouring under extreme bodily infirmity, which renders them incapable of discharging the ordinary duties of life, and proves a source of anxiety to their families. To enjoy health, and be freed from bodily pain without interruption, is seldom found to be the lot of our sinful race. And sometimes it happens that the best of men are subject to painful diseases, and for many years groan, being burdened.—The sorrows of the body, however great, are by no means equal to the burden of the heart. *The spirit of a man*, said Solomon, *can sustain his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear?* Not only the convictions of conscience, but the latent unbelief, pride and depravity of the heart, in various forms, interrupt the peace and the holy walk of the Christian with his God: which form an intolerable burden, and produce the most exquisite pain. This heavy burden compelled Paul to exclaim, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Although God bestows his grace, and accompanies that inestimable gift with numberless other blessings, yet he permits the old body of sin to remain for the trial of the heart, and the



victory of his grace. Weighty as this burden may be, it often is a mean by which the Christian is humbled in the dust; he practically learns the variety and the sufficiency of the fulness of grace from Jesus, to counteract the depravity of his heart, and to lead him more frequently to the Lord.—The ills of life, which generally consist in the loss of friends and of credit, in poverty, calumny, treachery in those we have most esteemed, with many other evils of the same nature; these make a material part of the heavy burden we have to carry through life. Such a complicated burden Job experienced amidst a thorny path. *O, said he, that my griefs were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balance together, for now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea!*—To a man who is born again of the Spirit, and has enjoyed the sacred pleasures of communion with God, no trouble is so great as the withdrawment of the sensible presence of his Lord. This adds gall to the vinegar of affliction, and sharpens every arrow shot at the heart. If God shines upon the soul, every burden becomes light, and nothing can disturb its tranquillity; but when that privilege be denied, the smallest burden becomes insupportable. This made David cry, *Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thy face in times of trouble?*—Ministers may be said to have a greater number of burdens to bear than other persons; and those who are designed for the greatest usefulness, will be found to sustain the heaviest load of affliction. They have temptations peculiar to their office; opposition from the world; the apostacy of those who had professed the truth; the enmity of those who once expressed the warmest attachment, and probably were foremost in their settlement in the Church; the small appearances

of conversion, and of practical religion ;—these form the contents of that burden which often bows the Ministers of Jesus to the dust, and causes them to water their path with tears.

The word *burden* in our text, according to Jarchi, signifies a *gift*. This certainly throws additional light upon the passage, and is by no means inconsistent with the conduct of God to his children, and indeed likewise to his only begotten Son Jesus. *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it ?* Afflictions to us are gifts designed for our good, to humble and to prove us. Yet, when under the burden of sorrow, how hard is it to believe they are designed in love for our advantage ! In the issue, however, we prove that *it is good for us that we have been afflicted*. Perhaps I am now addressing myself to some in this family who labour under a severe burden. It is not my present intention to inquire of what your burden may be composed ; what may be its weight ; or how long, or how far you have carried it ? Nor will I ask what expedients you may have taken to procure its removal. In preference, I shall, as proposed, call your attention to the exhortation which is given you in the text.

2. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord*. Happy is that man, or that family, to whom the Lord is known. While they feel the burdens of life too heavy and insupportable, they rejoice in their privilege of going to God for relief. It must not be forgotten, that Jesus hath borne the weight and punishment of our sins in his own person on the cross, and that thus he became our Redeemer. From this principle it is that Jesus is both able and willing to bear our heaviest burdens. PRAYER in this case becomes an obvious duty. Proving our own wisdom inadequate to

devise a way for relief, and our own strength insufficient to support us under the burden, we learn the necessity of going by prayer to the Lord.—FAITH is equally necessary, for unless we believe the Lord to be our friend, and embrace his promise, by which he invites, saying, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, we have no encouragement to apply for relief.—The exhortation of our text is, *Cast thy burden upon the Lord*. Here let me expose one great instance of human frailty. Often we are pressed down with our burdens; we go to the Lord in the formality of prayer for relief; but, alas, instead of casting them upon the Lord, and leaving them with him, we bring them away again. In this case, no wonder if our burdens increase in weight and measure, and more sensibly depress us. To cast our burden upon the Lord is, therefore, to believe that he will dispose of it for our good, and for his glory; it is to possess that unreserved resignation to his will, and that patience in our breast, which enables us to return from prayer as from the presence of the Lord, having left our burden with him. To practise this in our lives under suffering, we must have the assistance of supernatural aid: the Spirit of God alone can help our infirmity and actuate us to such a valuable service. Let me, therefore, entreat you, whenever you are pressed with a burden, be that burden what it may, to seek the aid of the Holy Spirit to influence your faith, and lead you in prayer to cast your burden upon the Lord. For the practice of this duty, the text affords very desirable encouragement.

3. *He will sustain thee*. Here, it is obvious, nothing is said of the *burden*, but of *you*. If the Lord is pleased to sustain *you*, the burden of course will be found suf-

ficiently light. He will strengthen you cheerfully to suffer and to perform all his holy pleasure concerning you. He will give you more grace ; increase your faith ; and animate you to pursue the rugged paths of life. A similar passage to our text, we have in the New Testament : *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.* This not only teaches you constantly to cast your cares upon the Lord, but, you are stimulated by the persuasion of God's care of you. Your body, soul, family, every concern that may attend you, are under the inspection of your Lord, who suffered on the cross for you. He has preserved you thus far ; promises that *he will never leave nor forsake you* ; and, eventually, that he will receive you to his presence in glory. How great is the number of those now in heaven, whom the Lord sustained under personal and public burdens, much heavier than yours ? And were it the pleasure of God to collect all their burdens, and place them upon you : is he not Almighty to grant you support ? Learn a useful lesson from those ancient worthies recorded in the Bible, who by faith and prayer were found daily in the practice of casting all their burdens and care upon the Lord ; and who have left it on record that *they were exceeding joyful in all their tribulations.*

Having opened to you some of the burdens of life ; explained the duty of casting them upon the Lord ; and enforced the exhortation from the power and goodness of Jesus to support you ; I shall close the discourse with a few reflections.—Learn the utility of religion. How many unfortunate individuals and families are there, who, loaden with sorrows, have no knowledge of God, nor seek his aid for support ? On the contrary, their afflictions produce the most improper tempers. Some have been so very unfortunate as to make use of base means to throw

off their burdens ; and others, still worse, by violent hands, have plunged themselves into the abyss of eternity ! How happy should you esteem yourselves if, amidst all your cares and burdens, God hath conducted your feet to the throne of his grace ! Be assured there is a gracious design in all your afflictions. Your faith, love, patience, nor any other virtue would be found necessary or useful, were it not for the sufferings of life. They certainly, in their proper exercise, show that there is a difference in you, which none but God can make ; and, likewise, it is by these fruit, well ripened, that the glory of grace appears to all around you. Go forward ; the Lord is with you, and will not forsake you. Yet a little while, and you will come to the verge of death, when you shall throw down every burden, and be made perfectly and eternally free from every thing that shall prevent your felicity in the enjoyment of God. And, when brought to the realms of bliss, you will adore the conduct of your gracious God ; and find the deliverance you have experienced under the sorrows of time, a source of gratitude through a vast eternity



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## LECTURE XLVI.

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### CHRIST A TESTATOR.

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HEBREWS ix. 16, 17.

*For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all whilst the testator liveth.*

O Lord, my God, whose sovereign love,  
Is still the same, nor e'er can move;  
Look to thy *testament*, and see,  
Has not thy love been shown to me?  
Remember me, my dearest friend,  
And love me alway to the end.

A TESTAMENT is the declaration of a person's mind and will, concerning the disposal of his property, and what he wishes to have performed after his death. It is so called, because it is a testimony which is not in force until the testator dies. These sentiments are contained in our text, purposely to show the confirmation of the covenant of grace, which is revealed in the Gospel, by the death of Christ as a testator. On this character of Jesus I shall offer some general observations, in expectation of your deriving both pleasure and advantage.

Our first remark is, that our Lord Jesus, as a Testator, had SENTIMENTS to communicate; PROPERTY to dispose of; and FRIENDS to receive them.—In general, the SENTIMENTS which Christ hath recorded in his testament, related to his own person; the design of his coming into our world; the council of Jehovah in the redemption of sinners; the office of the Holy Spirit; the

establishment of his Church; the revolutions of kingdoms; the call of the Gentiles; the restoration of the Jews; the first resurrection; his personal reign; the final judgment. Especially the sentiments of our adored Testator relate to his family of grace; the nature and design of his own sufferings; for, *without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission*. Not a single article relating to the honours of Jehovah, and the interests of men, is omitted. If the perusal of the will of a deceased earthly friend, by whom you have been benefited, affords gratification, how much more so the reading of the Scriptures as the Will and Testament of Christ? So true is it that John declared, *He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true*.—I likewise said, Jesus, our Testator, had PROPERTY to bequeath. Christ, in the character of wisdom, declares, *With me are durable riches and substance*. These treasures were the property of Christ, as Redeemer, and they are unsearchable; some for time, others for eternity. To specify these would require a long inventory indeed. However, it may be asserted, here are robes of righteousness for the guilty; pardons for the greatest transgressors; faith for the unbelieving; an inheritance among his saints for exiles; and a kingdom of glory that shall never end, for those who by sin were heirs of hell. Riches of providence suited for our bodies; riches of grace necessary for our souls; and riches of glory in the enjoyment of God for ever!—But I said also, Jesus our Testator had FRIENDS to whom he should bequeath his treasures. Friends did I say? Who are these? What are their names, and where do they reside? Let me look around. Ah! not a friend of Jesus, but once was his enemy, and in rebellion against him! Of such were some of you.

He found you enemies, but by grace he made you his friends. It is not our province to know *the names* written in the book of life; but it is our privilege to make our claim to the testament of Jesus, as conquered enemies and devoted friends; or as children adopted by grace, according to the good pleasure of his will. Now, to read the Will of Christ, and be assured he hath bequeathed you a new heart, a new robe, the treasures of grace, and the bliss of eternity,—what humility, gratitude and love should you possess!

When a person makes his last will and testament, we know that he has DEATH in his view. This certainly was the case with Jesus. When he engaged with Jehovah, the Father, for our redemption, death was before him; therefore he is called, *the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world*. From the time that God inspired Moses to commence the sacred writings, and through all the subsequent historians, from the first promise to Adam, that *the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head*, down to the completion of the New-Testament, we have the strongest assurances that Jesus came to die. But, what is of consequence for us to remark is, Jesus knew the *kind* of death he should undergo. A *natural* death upon the cross, attended with shame and inexpressible anguish; and a *moral* death in his soul, being excluded from his Father's sensible presence, while he made his soul an offering for sin. How charmingly does this enhance the love of Jesus to perishing sinners? and how sensibly should this consideration affect our hearts?

In law a man's will is of no use, unless it be SIGNED, SEALED, WITNESSED, and DELIVERED. Each of these particulars is visible in the perfect Will and Testament of Jesus. As to his adored NAME, we find it in every

page: *They*, said Jesus, *testify of me*. Of the SEALING of this testament, Daniel has remarkably prophesied: And the crimson blood of Christ is well known to be emphatically styled, *The blood of the New Testament*. Of WITNESSES, we may say they are both in heaven and on earth. The Father, at the baptism, and at the transfiguration of Christ, declared, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*. The Holy Ghost also is a Witness. He rested upon the person of Jesus at his baptism; aiding the Scripture penmen, and sealing the testimony of Jesus upon the heart of every believer. We may, therefore, conclude, with John, *there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost*. Not to mention the innumerable company of holy Angels, we may venture to assert, that on earth, multitudes of the disciples received the sentiments of our Lord from his own lips; a competent number committed them to writing, and afterwards many sealed the testimony with their own blood. To all which, with pleasure we add, this Testament is DELIVERED. The word is nigh unto us. It is preached to all nations. It hath stood the attacks of infidelity, and is preserved for our use to the present hour. Thanks be unto God for this unspeakable gift!

It is well known, that in making a testament, there is a formal disannulling all former wills. So the Apostle saith, *He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second*. Whether this assertion be referred to the moral law of nature, or to the ceremonial law of the Jews, it is equally just. The former is said to be an *hand writing against us, which Christ hath took out of the way, nailing it to his cross*. The latter consisting of carnal rites and ceremonies, was used as *shadows* for

the time being, until Christ, the *substance*, should come and establish the empire of his grace, both for Jews and Gentiles.

In making my last observation, I must again recite my text—*Where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator. For, a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all whilst the testator liveth.* Therefore, when the testator is dead, the will is published, and heirs put in their claim for possession of property. That Jesus actually died upon the cross, is certain from the repeated declarations of his crucifiers; from the soldiers piercing his side; and also from the manner in which he was buried. His last Will and Testament is now published to the greater part of the world. By the care and providence of God, the Testament has been translated into various languages, and has made its way among all nations. And by the same divine goodness, Ministers are raised up in different parts, and of different tongues, to proclaim this Testament to men; so that, as David saith, *Their sound is gone out into all the earth.*—The Will and Testament being published, *heirs* or *legatees* may put in their claim. It is of importance, therefore, to know in what manner this claim must be made. It is possible for a man, sentimentally, to approve the doctrine of election, which appears in the Testament of Jesus; and in his unholy practice give evidence he has no interest in it. Christ, in his Will, certainly knew the heirs of his salvation; but their names are in the book of life, secret to us; and no man may look into the Testament for his own proper name. But, our Lord Jesus has so formed his Will, that, in general terms, it is in favour of **SINNERS**. None but such need the treasures which Christ



hath bequeathed, and none but such who are made sensible of the nature, malignity, and demerit of sin, will desire, or put in their claim for a share of the blessings of his grace. *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief of sinners.* This is the substance of the Testament of Jesus. Under the humiliating character of a chief sinner, having no merit, and deserving eternal punishment from the transgressed law of God, you must put in your claim. The free promise of Jesus is, *Whosoever will, let him come.* This is our warrant to lay claim; and it must be added, none that ever did so were sent empty away. The great thing, therefore, is, to possess the *will*. This, confessedly, is of God's own creating. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* This is performed by the Spirit of God, who gives faith to rest upon the promise. And it has been, and still is the universal acknowledgment of all who have received a portion of the riches of Christ, that unless the Spirit of God had drawn them to Jesus, they would have continued in their unbelief. For want of knowing the Gospel way of obtaining the riches of Christ, many sensible sinners have lived for years in timidity and distress. I have, therefore, stated the subject as plain and as brief as possible, in hope of encouraging the fearful to take hold of the promise, and embrace the unsearchable treasures of Jesus.

Let me conclude by addressing you who know your interest in the Testament of Christ. Forget not the kindness of your invaluable friend. Ever cherish a deep conviction, that as a sinner you are an heir of misery; and that your happiness in life consists in living upon the multiplied blessings bequeathed to you by the Son of God. Constantly look over the variety of mercies and comforts

to which you are entitled ; and do not be surprised, that among the articles bequeathed you should find that of affliction. *In the world ye shall have tribulation ; but in me you shall have peace.* But then, your afflictions will prove fatherly chastisements ; and either in them, or after them, you will assuredly find that they work together for your good. You are, in an especial manner, to be exhorted to a lively attendance on the LORD'S SUPPER. In that institution you will realize the subject on which I have now addressed you. The cup is emphatically declared by Christ to be *the cup of the New Testament in his blood, shed for the remission of sins.* And to this you are exhorted in the most animated manner by Jesus. *This do, in remembrance of me.* As through the Testament of Jesus you have received grace, so, remember, it is an assurance that glory shall be yours in the regions of immortality.

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## LECTURE XLVII.

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### *FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.*

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PROVERBS xix. 11.

*It is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression.*

O what stupendous mercy shines  
Around the Majesty of heaven!  
Rebels he deigns to call his sons,  
Their souls renew'd, their sins forgiven,

Go, imitate the grace divine,  
The grace that blazes like a sun;  
Hold forth your fair, though feeble light,  
Through all your lives let mercy run.

FEW qualities in the human breast are more ornamental to the possessor, or of more value to society, than a readiness to forgive. It is, indeed, as Solomon justly pronounces it in the text, *the glory of man*; for it is an imitation of the good-will and compassion of the Almighty. Mankind are prone to err against God and one another. In this mixed, depraved state offences are unavoidable; and it may be presumed no persons, whether of obscure or public life, but at some period have found occasion to exercise forgiveness. This disposition, by the culture of education, may predominate in some breasts more than in others. But the intrinsic excellence of that valuable temper of which we now mean to discourse, is the fruit of God's grace; and its operations are in obedience to the express laws of Jesus Christ. The utility of this amiable virtue is very great in the general circle of society. It is much more so in a Church, where candour, brotherly-kindness, and forgiveness are essentially neces-

sary to its well-being. But the lustre of this temper shines with great brilliance in families. Parents and children, masters and servants, are equally capable of erring; and where hardness of heart and resentment prevail, in cases of injury, it renders the whole family proportionably wretched. Since, therefore, the exercise of this temper is of such consequence to you as a family, I shall briefly explain the words of our text, by considering some of the occasions which provoke our resentment;—show you what it is *to pass over a transgression*, and how the discharge of this duty may be said to be *the glory of man*.

1. From the long list of offences which frequently occur in our social connections, and which are calculated to irritate and to provoke the mind, we will name a few. SERVANTS, male or female, to whom you have committed the care of your property, or important concerns, may become treacherous, abuse your confidence, and destroy your interest. Perhaps such may have been long in your employ, and on whom you have conferred numberless tokens of favour; and they, on their part, have returned high professions of respect for you, and after all proved themselves insincere, and extremely base. To pass over transgressions of such a nature, and attended with such aggravating circumstances, requires a temper and disposition which seldom occupy the human breast, unless inspired by the Gospel.—CHILDREN, too, by that depravity which is attached to our fallen race, and by being exposed to temptation from evil companions, may be capable of dishonouring their father and their mother, and prove a source of the most exquisite sorrow. The follies of youth generally increase with their years. It is seldom that children make a very great breach of parental laws, and commit any great out-

breaking of flagrant conduct, without having been previously habituated to lesser acts of disobedience. Keen must be the reflection of those parents, who, by too excessive indulgence of follies in their children, at length have deeply to mourn their departure from virtue, and their devotedness to vice! It is not uncommon to find youth, devoid of sensibility, from vicious and improper connections, guilty of destroying the property of their parents, and thus becoming a source of anguish too exquisite to be described. Gloomy must that mansion be, where parents weep for a prodigal son! Nor is it, even now, a calamity uncommon, to find a pious David bedewing his couch with tears on the perfidious conduct of an Absalom. Parents' hearts, by reiterated transgression of their children, may, however, become too rigid and unforgiving. It is possible there may be circumstances attending a disobedient child, which call aloud for reconciliation and forgiveness; and thus to prove that it is the glory of the parent, as well as of the man, to pass over a transgression.—We will next name the transgressions of our professed FRIENDS. The ties of common friendship are confessedly sweet, and become a source of sublime pleasure while we pass along this vale of tears; especially when such friendship exists under a profession of religion. However, this kind of friendship is capable of variations and dissolution. Few, indeed, are like *Saul and Jonathan, who were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death were not divided*. Whether it is because we least expect it in such, certain it is, that the instances of ingratitude and treachery which make the keenest impression upon us, occur in those with whom we have been connected in a profession of religion. *Mine own familiar friend, said David, in whom I trusted,*



*which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. Had it been an enemy, then I could have borne it; but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.* For Christians to meet with disappointments from the world is not so unexpected; but when they proceed from those religious connections in whom we have reposed our friendship, it is productive of extreme pain, and may be ranked among the calamities of life. And can we forgive such? Is it possible cheerfully to pass over such transgressions? Yes, if we are Christians indeed, it is possible: the treachery of servants, the disobedience of children, or the ungenerous conduct of professed friends, must be all passed over.

2. What this duty is we will now briefly explain. To *pass over a transgression* certainly does not mean you should wink or connive at the offence; nor that you should professedly pass it over for a season, and at another time renew your resentment, and retaliate the offence. This conduct would discover an ungenerous mind, and, instead of reforming, would harden the offender, and expose you to the censure of every good man. But, certainly, you must be convinced, that, to pass over a transgression is to pardon it; so to bury it in oblivion, as not to suffer it to irritate your breast, much less to mention it again to the party or to others. *All his transgressions, said Ezekiel, that he hath committed, shall not be mentioned unto him.*—On the manner of forgiving an offence, perhaps you may require direction. I presume it is your duty and your glory to possess within your breast a cheerful willingness to forgive, let the offence or the offender be what they may. But it is not your

duty to declare forgiveness to the transgressor until he shall have acknowledged his fault; for this may induce him to indulge other improprieties. No doubt the father of the prodigal cultivated in his breast the most tender forgiveness to his disobedient son; but, he did not give him the reconciling embrace until the profligate was found upon his knees. Our Lord gave the same rule to his disciples: *If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he REPENT, forgive him.* And in the very next verse directions are given as to the repetition of such acts of forgiveness. *If he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him.* This rule is positive; and should the offender be so unfortunate as to make an improper use of your generous temper, still you will have the pleasing consciousness of having obeyed your Saviour's command, and will enjoy peace in your own breast.

3. We shall now show why this forgiving temper is said to be *the glory of a man*. It certainly discovers a true greatness of mind, and raises the offended high above the transgressor, infinitely more so than the most enlarged gratification of revenge. Your forgiveness may be accompanied with that conviction which may make a conquest of your enemy, and render him in future an inviolable friend.—Those who are familiar with their Bible will immediately perceive, that to pass over a transgression is the glory of a man, because it is assimilating the conduct of Jehovah, who is *ready to forgive. He delighteth in mercy, and abundantly pardoneth.* The life of Christ, even to his last moments, was an exposition upon our subject, so engaging, that it needs only to be read to inspire us with a disposition to pass over the

transgressions of our enemies. *When he was reviled, he reviled not again*; and when extended on the cross, he prayed for his crucifiers. It certainly was the glory of the Man Christ Jesus to pass over a transgression; and, by the shedding of his most precious blood, to bring the most rebellious into fellowship with God. And shall we not learn from Jesus to forgive the offences of our fellow creatures? Can we be his disciples indeed, if we harbour resentment against our enemies? Impossible!—Let me further say, it is the glory of a *man of God* to pass over a transgression. If it be called a *moral virtue*, it is unquestionably to be named a *Christian grace*. The unbelieving, obdurate *heart of stone* may not be expected to relent: but *the heart of flesh*, which God bestows upon his children, is so replete with grace, and so susceptible of the most tender impressions of benevolence, forgiveness, and love, that it cannot admit a thought of retaliation against an offender. See David, the man after God's own heart, in the cave at Engedí, when his inveterate enemy Saul was in his hand, and at a blow could have deprived him of life, and have placed himself upon the throne: he was content with cutting off the skirt of his robe, as a trophy of his compassion! Couldst thou, to such an enemy, have acted such a part? Give me leave to assure you, if you are the children of God, the Spirit of God will teach you to copy the example of your Saviour, and produce in you the fruit of *long-suffering, gentleness, and goodness*. You cannot venture to ask God to *forgive you your trespasses*, unless you are conscious of *forgiving those who have trespassed against you*. The recollection of the full, rich, unmerited compassion of Christ in forgiving you, will never fail to operate upon your heart when called to acts of forgiveness to others.

On the first motion of enmity to those who may offend you, look immediately to the compassionate Saviour, who bled upon the cross for you. Remember my text; and remember too, that as a man, and as a Christian, it is your duty, your happiness, nay, your very glory, to pass over a transgression, and rise superior in dignity to the offender. When tempted to revenge, immediately take your Bible, and read the parable of the prodigal son; and pray that the same mind may be in you, as was so charmingly expressed by the compassionate father. Few who read that parable, sufficiently investigate the unforgiving, inveterate, unmanly character of the *elder brother*, who, by his relentless heart, excluded himself from the pleasures of the feast on return of the prodigal. While we hold this unlovely, selfish, unrelenting character in contrast with the truly excellent and compassionate father, what a pity is it that any should be found, whether in a family or in a church, to copy after such an unhappy example, when acts of forbearance and forgiveness are required!

I have now enumerated to you some instances of offences which are calculated to provoke your resentment;—explained the duty incumbent upon you to pass over a transgression;—and enforced it upon you, from the consideration that it is the glory of a man to perform it. I sincerely wish, that, whether masters, servants, parents, children, or friends, you may be assisted to practise this lecture in your future lives. *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.*

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## LECTURE XLVIII.

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### *THE CHRISTIAN'S GAIN BY DEATH.*

PHIL. i. 21.

—*To die is gain.*

Sweet to rejoice in lively hope,  
That when my *change* shall come,  
Angels shall hover round my bed,  
And waft my spirit home.

L. H.

THAT the excellence of the Christian religion is evident in the lives of those who in reality possess it, very few will attempt to deny. Paul, though once a notorious blasphemer and persecutor, obtained mercy from Christ, and by the riches of his grace, was influenced with unbounded ardour, to preach the faith he once attempted to destroy. By the sanctity of his life, he gave a convincing evidence of his personal religion, and the reality of his commission as a servant of the Lord Jesus. Nor did he count his life dear unto him, so that he might finish his course with joy. Nay, he assures us in this verse, *To me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* That is, “in my estimation, to live in and for Christ is the source of my salvation and happiness, and the only thing worth living for, or that deserves the name of life.” It cannot be contradicted, that the life of Paul was absorbed in the life, light, and love of Christ, performing his will, and bearing his image. No wonder that a man so highly favoured was ready to exchange worlds, and able to make a good estimate of the advantages he should obtain. However, thousands besides Paul have lived such a life in



Christ, and have been indulged with the same conquest over mortality, in sight of an eternal world. In pleasing hope God may grant you also the same privilege, I shall seek your instruction in this discourse, by offering you some considerations on the UNAVOIDABLE, AFFECTING, AND SOLEMN, though NECESSARY SUBMISSION to death; and will endeavour to assist you in making some estimate of the Christian's GAIN by death.

1. Death, which is the separation of the soul from the body, and the passing into another state, is UNAVOIDABLE. God, who is infinitely good, and taketh pleasure in the works of his hand, can never be said, without cause, to appoint unto man such a dissolution. The Scriptures inform us, that *by sin came death. The wages of sin is death.* Therefore, *it is appointed unto men once to die.* No age, no station can possibly revoke the doom: nothing is more sure than death; and to the sceptre of the *king of terrors* all must inevitably bow.—Death is as AFFECTING as it is unavoidable. The bloom and beauty of human nature fall to the dust, and turn to corruption. *Thou changest his countenance and sendest him away.* Yes, the dearest pledges of our love; a charming offspring, a tender wife, the affectionate parent; all not only stand marked as victims of death, but must assuredly die. Ah! what tears, what rending of the heart, what extreme sorrow is attendant upon the train of death, when he enters into our families! We may also say, that death is truly affecting in itself; it is so in anticipation, and especially in its consequences; for, *after death comes the judgment.*—We therefore add, death is SOLEMN; it fixes the final state; it is the corner we turn, either to infinite joy or endless pain. As we close our eyes in death, so we shall

awake in the morning of the resurrection. There is no work nor device in the grave. There is a peculiar solemnity in man's birth, though seldom realized. He is born for eternity; a subject of corruption, exposed to numberless foes, and surrounded with snares, all the fruit of sin. But the moment of death is still more solemn; it casts the die, and launches man into a vast eternity. If the mere consideration of these things makes us tremble, what must we feel under the immediate agonies of death!—Concerning the righteous especially, we may also add, that death is NECESSARY. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Corruption cannot inherit incorruption. Though Christ hath taken away the *sting* of death, yet all his redeemed family must pass through the valley of the *shadow* of death, in their passage to immortality. The wicked, by death, lose their all; the comforts and honours of life forsake them, and they pass away to experience the solemnities of eternal judgment. Not so the children of the Lord. As to them, *to live is Christ*, so *to die is gain*. Let us then, as we proposed,

2. Attempt to make some estimate of the Christian's GAIN by death.—Certainly we may say, he gains a perfect discharge from all the miseries of human life. His dying groan is the sound of expiring sorrow. Satan can no more vex the soul, nor tempt the feet astray. Sin, his worst enemy, is for ever lost. The wicked cease from troubling. The world now smiles or frowns in vain. Every enemy, like the host of Pharaoh, sinks into the sea of death, to rise no more. What is still of more consequence to the true Christian, is the powers of unbelief; corrupt passions; and an hard heart, which had been his baneful inmate, and his greatest sorrow. These

shall all flee away when death shall break the chain. Come then, ye weary travellers, to Zion's gate; fear not; though faint, yet pursue. A few more dark days, a few more tears and conflicts, and death will introduce you where there is no more sickness, pain, nor sorrow; but where God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes, and crown you with immortal joy!—By death the redeemed of the Lord gain an immediate admission to the visible presence of the Lord Jesus. *Absent from the body, present with the Lord.* In this vale of tears it is our highest privilege to walk in the light of God's countenance; but such seasons, through intervening clouds of sin and temptation, are not often enjoyed. *Now we see through a glass darkly; but then, face to face.* God and the Lamb, in the midst of the throne, shall display the riches of glory, and the soul be absorbed in the rays of eternal love!—The possession of a glorified body on the morning of the resurrection, is no small part of the Christian's gain by death. *Jesus shall change our vile bodies, and make them like unto his own glorious body, according to his mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.* Vile indeed are our bodies, by disease, and through union with their kindred sinful souls; but this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. Our flesh shall die, and rest in hope. United to the person of Jesus, and bought with his precious blood, mortality shall be succeeded by eternal life. Let us, therefore, triumph with Job: *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.*—It is not improper I should add, in estimating the gain

of a Christian by death, that he obtains an introduction to the society of glorified Saints and Angels in heaven. Angels below encamp around them that fear the Lord; and are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. The Saints of the Lord in the temple of grace below take sweet counsel together, and mutually share in the numberless privileges the Lord hath bestowed upon his Church. By death they will be no losers. Angels shall convey their souls to glory; and the spirits of the just made perfect shall afford them the most delightful, inconceivable joy. *Then, says Paul, shall I know even also as I am known.* Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, ministers, and saints of the Lord, shall not only know each other, but recount the wonders of grace and of providence which have attended them while here below. Here their communion is often interrupted; but there no cessation shall attend their delightful employ of adoration and praise.—We may conclude, that by death the Christian gains a crown of glory. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,* is the promise of Jesus to all his followers; which, no doubt, includes every thing that can be implied under the idea of greatness, grandeur, pleasure, wealth, and endless glory.

Thus I have offered you some reflections on the unavoidable, affecting, solemn, and necessary submission to mortality. After all our efforts, we can only, as it were, paint death upon canvass; or, by signs, or sounds, give you what I may call the skeleton of death. The reality, the pain, or the bliss of dying, surpass the living to describe! Let me, therefore, exhort you by the worth of your souls, by the joys of the righteous, and by the sorrows of the wicked in death, seriously to propose



to yourselves this solemn question : “ Am I prepared to die ? ”—I have also attempted to make some faint estimate of the gain a Christian may certainly expect by death. The cause of all which is in Christ. *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.* You are sinners by nature and by practice ; to die in your sins is to lose the eternal happiness of your souls ; it is the loss of heaven and the gain of hell. Mark with serious attention, the connection of our text. *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* No gain by death, unless you live in Christ. May the Spirit of God lead you to Jesus, and give you that faith in his blood for pardon and acceptance, which alone can deliver you from the fear of death, and inspire you with hope of an eternal gain !—Those who know the Saviour as their own, I wish frequently to meditate on the expected gain by death. Job said, *I would not live always.* For many reasons a good man may desire a continuance in life ; perhaps to see his children called by grace to perform some good work for the benefit of society, and to see Zion prosper in her King. Yet the certain, more valuable, and glorious acquisitions by death, not only reconcile him to dissolution, but create in him *a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* Remember, it is your privilege and your interest to realize these important subjects. How should the persuasion of such great gain reconcile us to mortality ? Be assured the salutary influence of this upon your heart and life will be very great. And when the hour of death shall come, you will resign with cheerfulness ; die in faith, and leave a noble testimony behind you for the encouragement of others, and for the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



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## LECTURE XLIX.

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### THE UNCHANGEABLENESS OF CHRIST.

HEBREWS xiii. 8.

*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

Jesus, as thou art still *to-day*  
As *yesterday* the same,  
Present to heal, in me display  
The virtues of thy Name. R.

THE primary intention of the Apostle in this address, was to console the Hebrew converts under the loss of their spiritual rulers, and to exhort them to consider the end of their conversation, life, and doctrine, which was invariably and perpetually *Christ Jesus*. As ministers, like other men, are mutable, and continue not by reason of death, it is a source of joy that Jesus Christ ever liveth, and is unchangeable; therefore able to preserve the most important interest of his Church, until days and years are known no more. You, who are Christians indeed, must certainly possess a consciousness of the changeableness of your comforts and your sensations, in the various duties and trials of your lives. To you, therefore, it is an unbounded source of satisfaction, that your Saviour is unchangeable; the same in *Himself*, and the same in his relation and in his *love to you*, yesterday, and to day, and for ever. May our meditation upon this subject be the mean which the Spirit of God shall bless to increase our faith, and enlarge our affections towards our immutable Saviour.

1. Let us first begin with the immutability and unchangeableness of the PERSON of Jesus Christ. What is asserted in our text is not applicable to any mere creature, whether human or angelic; for of these we have sufficient evidences of their mutability. Immutability, unchangeableness and eternity are essential only to Jehovah, and are necessary to his underived, unmixed, holy nature. Immutability is, therefore, ascribed to Christ, as he is God over all, blessed for evermore; and as he is the Redeemer and Saviour of sinners. *I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last; which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* May we not, therefore, join David and Paul in their sublime ascription of immutability to our adored Emmanuel? *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.* Jesus, the rock of ages, is a permanent foundation for our hope. It is from hence that every name which Jesus bears, every relation he sustains, and every office he discharges for his people, are invariable. Christ our HIGH PRIEST is now in heaven with an *unchangeable priesthood*, ever living to make intercession for us. With propriety, and with pleasure we embrace the words of our text as charmingly descriptive of our unchangeable Saviour. Our Jesus was the same *yesterday*, that is, in time that is past, *set up from everlasting*. A Saviour to our first sinning parents, to the patriarchs, the prophets, and to all the family of grace

under the former dispensation. So he is *to-day*, the time present, the blessed day of the Gospel; in which he proves himself the same Almighty Saviour, and unchangeable friend to sinners. And so Jesus will be in future, *for ever*; as long as he has one of his people remaining on earth to enjoy him; and equally so when the whole body of his Church shall be complete in glory. This charming testimony to the immutability of the Saviour has been given by the subjects of his grace in all ages, and in every clime. This strong rock constitutes the basis of our hope and perseverance through life; our victory in death, and our eternal felicity.

2. Let us next indulge a few reflections on the unchangeableness of that SALVATION which Jesus hath accomplished, as the effect of his covenant engagement with his Father. This subject constitutes the most important part of the Gospel, and is equally necessary for us to understand. Of Jehovah, the Father and the Son, it is said, *The council of peace shall be between them both*. And David knew that *the covenant of God was ordered in all things, and sure, which was all his salvation, and all his desire*. To redeem and to save, Jesus must not only assume our nature, but be made under the precept, and the penalty of the law. Thus, *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us*. *He is the rock; his work is perfect*. *By one offering, he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified*. *He hath obtained eternal redemption for us*. *What God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God doeth it that men may fear before him*. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. The blood of Jesus so perfectly cleanses from all sin, his obe-

dience and sacrifice are so meritorious, that law and justice can require no more. For thus saith the Lord, *The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.* This is that salvation which is so worthy of God to accomplish, and so necessary for sinners to receive. If but one sin had been unpardoned, or one pure command required of us, as conditional of our salvation, it would have marred the work of God, and left us without hope. We are utterly unable to atone for one offence, or perform one duty untainted with imperfection. This salvation is as irrevocable as it is complete. Jesus will never tear up that best wedding robe of righteousness which he hath wrought for his people; nor will he rase that foundation which he hath laid in his own most precious blood for their standing. He is, therefore, according to our text, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. May each of you receive that precious faith which shall enable you to cast your souls on this complete Saviour. This is the only encouragement we can pronounce to sinners who feel their guilt and misery. And no less valuable is it to the oldest and most advanced Christians to satisfy their souls, and expand their hearts in grateful praise; for *Christ is all and in all; and ye are complete in him.* Thanks be unto God for an unchangeable salvation in his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and thanks be unto him who hath redeemed us to God by his blood!

3. We shall now attempt to show you that the work of Christ in the CONVERSION OF SINNERS is essentially the same *yesterday, to-day, and for ever.* Men may be brought over to professing religious parties, and make a flaming appearance by numberless means, and from

various motives : likewise Christ's own people may be under various circumstances ; and different dispensations of providence may attend them : but the efficient *cause*, and the *rule* of operation, in their true conversion, are the same. They are *created in Christ Jesus ; born again of the Spirit ; one faith*, like the vital fluid in the human body, runs through the whole ; and one Gospel of truth opens the door of hope, and guides their feet into the paths of peace. It is also to be confessed, that all those who receive spiritual life from Christ, have an analogy of experience. *As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.* Conviction and condemnation by the law ; a conscious inability, whether whole or in part, to obtain salvation by that law ; an implicit reliance on the righteousness and atonement of Jesus for eternal life ; an ardent thirst to glorify God, to live by faith on the Son of God, and to bear the most abundant fruit in all holy obedience : these may, I think, be denominated *the first principles of the oracles of God*. This is that pure language which the Lord promised to turn to all his people, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.—Now, from what I have said, you may readily perceive that Christ is invariably the same in the conversion of men. You may readily perceive that the efficient *cause* is the operation of his *Spirit* ; the *rule* by which it is produced is the *word* of his Gospel. He has never varied. He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. The circle of the arts, the eloquence of men, the most elaborate productions from the press, have been totally ineffectual to bring one soul to Christ. And as Jesus never deviates from his own blessed way in the conversion of sinners, so all who have been converted, have declared,



in unison with Paul, *By the grace of God, I am what I am. Thus, as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* And, I hope, some of you who now hear me, can advance as faithful witnesses for God, that Christ, his Spirit, and his Gospel, have appeared in richest harmony in the conversion of your soul to God.

I could now enter into an investigation of the unchangeableness of Christ in his *truth*, his *promises*, and his *threatenings*, and prove to you that not one word which he hath spoken ever shall fail. Likewise explain the invariable method by which Christ is pleased to maintain the life, comfort, hope, and perseverance of his people under all their sufferings, and give them a triumphant passage through death to immortality; each of which would add to the weight of evidence, and illustrate this charming truth, that Christ Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, to all his ransomed race. But my concluding remark must be,

4. That Christ Jesus is immutable in his LOVE. This sweetens the whole, and sheds lustre upon every truth I have advanced in this discourse. If Jesus in his *Person* is immutable, it is impossible he should possess *love* which is capable of mutability. An idea that this is possible, is at once so derogatory to the pure nature of Christ, to the express declarations of his word, and to the hope of his people, that we will instantly dismiss it from our thoughts. Jesus declares, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love. He is the friend who loveth at all times. He resteth in his love, and hateth putting away. And whom he loveth, he loveth unto the end.* These are scripture testimonies, which are calculated to raise the depressed mind, and warm the coldest heart. Yes, Jesus is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever in his

love. The manifestations of his love to you have been in proportion to your best interests; and if you have not always lived beneath the sensibility of his smiles, still the *principle* of his love is invariably the same. O how consoling the thought! Especially when we recollect our own variations and changes in mind, and in heart! Thanks be unto Christ for his precious unchangeable love!

Come ye who feel the burden of your sins, and the carnality of your passions. And ye backsliders in heart, who, Peter like, with all your once flaming zeal, yet now walk afar off—come, look again to your injured Lord! O how great the mercy; how replete with consolation for you, that Jesus is unchangeable in his Person, his grace, and his love. His arms are open to receive returning sinners; his bowels melt with love. None were ever rejected who fled to his embrace. If, according to the spirit of our text, sinners of every description **YESTERDAY** obtained mercy, it is with confidence I can assure you, there is no word in his Gospel to exclude *you* **TODAY**. Therefore, to a glorious, unchangeable Christ, may we *to-day* and *for ever* render all possible adoration and praise.

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## LECTURE L.

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### WINTER.

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JOHN X. 20.

*It was winter.*

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Fond man,  
Behold thy pictur'd life! pass some few years  
Thy flowery spring, thy ardent summer, thy  
Sober autumn fading into age, and  
Pale concluding winter comes at last  
And shuts the scene!

WINTER was the season in which the feast of the dedication was held at Jerusalem, in commemoration of the recovery of the temple from the Syro-Grecians, it was appointed, not by divine authority, but by Judas Maccabeus. The season was not only a just emblem of the unfruitful state of the Jews at the appearance of Messiah, but as they remain to the present day, afflicted and persecuted upon the face of the earth.—May their wintry state soon be succeeded by the beauties of a spring; and their souls constrained to embrace with ardour the very Christ whom they have rejected and slain.

The dreary shades of winter are a just emblem of human nature in its fallen state. Though natural life remains, sin, like the northern blast, has stripped man of his moral virtues; and, as a tree divested of its fruit and foliage, he bears the very image of death. Dryden's description of the effects of winter is so just and pertinent to our present reflections, that we cannot but recite it.

" Behold yon mountain's hoary height  
 Made higher with new mounts of snow ;  
 Again behold the winter's weight  
 Oppress the lab'ring woods below ;  
 And streams, with icy fetters bound,  
 Benumb'd and cramp't as solid ground."

A little acquaintance with human nature will give us leave to appropriate this poetic description to our present depraved state. The affections of the soul towards God are as the cold stream bound in fetters of ice ; and the conscience benumbed by reiterated crimes, as the frozen clod. His beauty withered, and his verdure lost ! *Dead in trespasses and in sin. The understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God.* None, by nature, bear the fruit of righteousness, whether in youth or in old age. *There is none that doeth good, no not one.* The most barren and dreary winter does but faintly describe the unfruitful and wretched state of man as a sinful, fallen being. Happy, unspeakably happy for us, Jesus, the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, hath arisen upon our guilty race, and opens the prospect of a gracious spring ! It is said, " Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour of sinners, was born in the season of winter." Be it so, or not ; of this we are certain, that *in the fulness of time, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* No winter storm can sufficiently describe the poverty and sorrows of his blessed life, who came into our winter state of moral death, purposely, by the shedding of his blood, to grant us a glorious spring of salvation ! O for this love, let every tongue proclaim the Saviour's matchless praise !—Permit me to urge this

subject a little farther, with a view of describing the sensible experience of the convert's heart. As winter presents nature in cold dress and in extreme desolation, so the eye of that man who is illuminated from above, needs no emblem more striking than that season to describe the moral state of his soul before God. Vapour, clouds, storm, tempest, barrenness, inactivity, are emblems which serve to heighten the conviction of his heart. And as winter can be turned into the beauties of spring only by the power of the GOD OF NATURE, so his conscious breast is taught to know that a change of the depraved heart, and the fruit of peace and joy, must be produced by the sovereign power of the GOD OF ALL GRACE. It is our unspeakable felicity, that as Jesus our Redeemer hath purchased his people with his blood, it is his glory to communicate grace for the renewal of their souls. *The wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad, and the desert shall blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.* When such mercy is vouchsafed to the cold and barren heart of man, how welcome, how transporting is the change. In no words can this better be expressed, than in those of the beloved to his spouse, in Solomon's Song. *My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.*

While the beauties of spring, the warmth of summer, and the fruits of autumn engage our attention, we little think of succeeding winter; yet the season will revolve; *summer and winter, seed-time and harvest shall not cease.* Each returning season becomes absolutely neces-



sary in the constitution of the natural system, for the benefit of man. These observations are appropriate also to the moral world. However sweet and charming may be the spring-time of conversion to God, such is the present state of things, that changes are attendant upon our progress through life. *Thou madest my mountain to stand strong*, said David. *I said, I shall never be moved; but thou hidest thy face, and I am troubled*. Few, if any, who have tasted the love of Jesus, but more or less have verified those words in their experience.

Alternate seasons of joy and pain, prosperity and adversity, attend the Christian and the Church, in their militant state. While I pronounce these sentiments, a conviction of their correctness may occupy your breasts. Though once you happily enjoyed the pleasures of sacred spring, and rejoiced beneath the smiles of your Lord, you are now disposed, in the language of the venerable Newton, to express your sensibility of an affecting change—

My soul a sharper winter mourns;  
Barren and fruitless I remain;  
When will the gentle spring return,  
And bid my graces rise again?

As we purpose to spend a few minutes more to examine into this truly uncomfortable state of the Church and the Christian's heart, I think it not improper to describe to you the natural cause of the winter season of the year.—Passing over many philosophical remarks which might be introduced, it will be sufficient to observe, that winter has been defined to be that portion of the year when the days are shortest. Notwithstand-

ing the coldness of this season, it has been demonstrated that the sun is really nearer to the earth in winter than in summer. The principal cause of this difference is, that in winter the sun's rays fall so obliquely upon us, that any given number of them is spread over a much greater portion of the earth's surface where we live; and then each point must have fewer rays than in summer. Besides, there comes a greater degree of cold in the long winter nights than there can return of heat in days so short; and on both these accounts the cold must necessarily increase. In the summer, on the contrary, from the position of the earth, the rays of the sun fall more perpendicular upon us, and therefore come with greater force, and in greater numbers on the same place; and by their longer continuance, a much greater degree of heat is imparted by day than can possibly fly off in the night. Dismissing these philosophical reflections, let us examine ourselves. Our turning from Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, is the cause of our winter state of soul. And it is our unspeakable mercy, that Jesus, like the sun in the firmament, remains fixed, and is *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*. When, therefore, by our numberless sins and temptations we turn away from the Lord, it is but just the rays of his love should fall with less sensibility, or, if I may so say, *more obliquely* upon us. *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you.* This produces our winter state. It makes the affections cold and inactive. And a conviction of disobedience and departure from God, aided by temptation, produces darkness of mind, and agitation of soul. The effect which this state has upon the heart in duty, is very apparent. The hand of faith becomes too benumbed

to lay hold on a promise ; and the feet of obedience too cold to walk in the path of God's commands. When reading the Bible, hearing the Gospel, or engaged in prayer, how lifeless and barren ! Praise, instead of flowing from an heart warm with gratitude and love to God, hangs like icicles upon the quivering lips. Nor are these the only attendants on mental winter. Temptations, like the howling wind, often affright the soul ; and afflictions burst in torrents, threatening to destroy. Permit me to ask if this affords a picture of your state ? Once, perhaps, you abounded in the fruits of righteousness ; you triumphed in the love of Jesus ; and was charmed in union with the sheep of his pasture, in which you felt a degree of heaven below. Alas ! how great is the change ! Bear in mind, that unguarded Peter turned away from Jesus ; he walked afar off ; finally entered the High Priest's hall, and stood at the fire warming himself. *It was winter.* Ah ! his soul was more cold than his body ! His heart, like the frozen stream, was stopped in its course towards his suffering Master, and at length he denied him with awful imprecations ! Lord, what is man when bereft of thee ? Let us, then, beware of walking in Peter's steps, lest we plunge ourselves into an abyss of sorrow by denying our Lord. The progressive effects of cold, first to chill the body, then benumb and decoy to sleep, and afterwards to plunge in death, have been too often experienced by thousands on land and sea to admit a doubt ; and the application of these remarks to a revolting Christian are too visible to need a comment.

These observations on the winter state of an individual Christian may, with equal propriety, be applied to the state of religion in some particular congregations. Like the garden of the Lord they once flourished and bore

fruit. Graces and gifts, like the choicest collection of flowers, displayed their beauty, and yielded their richest fragrance. *The Sun of Righteousness* shone with splendour upon them, and love glowed from soul to soul. Sinners of every age and station bowed to the sceptre of mercy; and the Beloved came down to take of his pleasant fruit. It may be truly said of such a people, that the beauties of celestial spring, the genial warmth of summer, and the copious harvest of autumn, have been by them happily enjoyed. Now the blast of winter is spread around. The trees that were adorned with foliage, with flowers, and with holy fruit, bear the very image of death. Who can take delight in walking here? A congregation in such a state afford an unwelcome sight indeed! To such may the Lord send a reviving spring, and grant them renewed tokens of his redeeming love!

FAMILIES too, as well as Churches, are subject to painful vicissitudes. They may have their lively spring and their fruitful summer; prosperity in trade, the charming sweets of friendship, children blooming under the most endearing prospects of usefulness, and health enjoyed under ten thousand bounties of indulgent providence! Yet, ah! how soon may their bright sky be overcast, and the cold hand of adversity, like the nipping frost, prove the harbinger of dreary winter! Such vicissitudes attended the family of Job. His earthly comforts gone; his children slain; and he himself removed from a bed of ease to the loathsome dung-hill. So fleeting, so uncertain, are all transitory enjoyments. How many excellent families, like Job, have painfully experienced a change from the genial warmth of earthly comforts to the dark shades of woe!



I shall now show you, that as in the natural world winter is productive of advantage, so likewise the uncomfortable winter state of the Christian may eventually prove beneficial.—Were there no winter, spring, summer, nor autumn would display such a great variety of beauties; for the earth itself would lose those rich stores of nourishment and fertility to which even the winter so copiously contributes. David, viewing the Divine economy of nature, with sublime adoration exclaims, *The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light of the sun. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.* It is far from our wish to charge God with being the author, or dictator of our sinful revoltings; these, with humility and shame, we take to ourselves. But he is graciously pleased, by the dispensations of his providence and grace, to overrule the various vicissitudes of our lives, and cause them to *work together for our good.* As the recollection of the frowning skies of winter makes us more ardently rejoice in the return of spring, so a consciousness of our follies makes the bright manifestations of Emmanuel's love more welcome and rejoicing to our hearts.—In the cold season of winter many noxious vapours are dispersed, and insects destroyed, which otherwise would devour the fruits of the earth. Such is the utility of afflictions; they are made subservient to the correction of our tempers and vile passions, which are equally injurious to us as they are offensive to God.—This is the season when the husbandman prunes his trees, lopping off the decayed branches in order to their greater fertility. Our Saviour hath assured us, that *every branch in him that beareth fruit, his heavenly Father purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*—The trees of the forest, that



often bend under the winter storm, are said to take deeper root in the earth, and to shoot their fibers far and wide, so that on the returning spring their branches spread afresh, and wave their heads with greater beauty. Not less so the people of the Lord have ever found, that so far from the various storms of life proving their destruction, they fail not to take deeper root in humility, and grow more abundantly useful on the return of a merciful spring.—Although Christians in their winter state may exclaim, “When will these dark days and gloomy nights of adversity be over?” they may rest assured, that as there have never been winters without succeeding springs, the Lord will not forsake them, but in tender mercies will revive them with his love. There would be no need of the winter graces of faith and patience, if it were summer with us all the year. Let these remarks encourage you who know the Lord, and be assured that the changes to which the Christian life is subject are overruled for your best interest.

I cannot close this discourse without giving you one other lesson of instruction which the subject of winter is calculated to afford. The season of winter is a most striking emblem of the state of the dead. Look on yon trees which were once laden with delicious fruit, now bending beneath the weight of snow! See how the stream that flowed with majestic ease, is now bound in cold fetters, and forbid to move! The earth, so lately covered with corn, with grass, and with flowers, is now one scene of devastation! Who can cause the trees again to bud, the stream to flow, and the earth to spring and bear its richest verdure? None but God. And he displays this power to us on each returning spring. Does it, then, *seem a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?*

Does the Lord annually produce such an astonishing change in universal nature, and cannot he raise your bodies from the dust of death? Most assuredly he will. *The dead in Christ shall arise first.* If indeed you are the Lord's, be exhorted to live in prospect of this great event. *Your flesh shall rest in hope. Those that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* Then, how great the change! The winter of mortality shall pass away. A state of holiness and bliss shall unfold its stores. Sin shall cease, and misery be abolished. Storms shall beat, and winter pierce no more; but light and joy, like one unbounded spring, for ever, ever bloom.

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## LECTURE LI.

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### *THE PURE LANGUAGE.*

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ZEPH. iii. 9.

*For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.*

A wonderful teacher is Christ,  
Instruction he'll wisely impart  
To all who recline on his breast,  
To every teachable heart.

O give us a knowledge divine  
Of every fruit in thy word;  
And may we triumphantly join  
To praise our adorable Lord.

THOSE who are conversant with the Old Testament cannot but perceive, that while God exposed the wickedness of men, he revealed, through the promised Messiah, the blessings of redemption and reformation. It is equally obvious, that the figurative language used to express such dispensations of mercy are in great variety. Such as liberty for slavery; the fruitful field for a barren wilderness; a state of moral light for gross darkness. On the perusal of Zephaniah's prophecy, we see described the degeneracy of that age by their conversation; but God, in the words of our text, promises to all his people a display of his goodness, by turning to them a pure language; not only for their moral reformation, but for the worship of his holy name. I shall now attempt to explain this valuable promise, in hopes that the Lord may graciously fulfil it in the experience of all who hear me.

Language is the communication of our ideas and sensa-

tions by words. It may be called either natural or artificial. Artificial, when formed by words invented by men, and used by general consent, for communicating their sentiments for the information or benefit of society.—Natural, as speech and language were conferred by God on man, in his first creation, for the important purposes of conversing with his Maker; with his own species as a sociable creature; and for expressing his ideas of the diversified objects of creation which surround him.\* Cowper excellently says, “I doubt not Adam, on the very day of his creation, was able to express himself in terms both forcible and elegant, and he was at no loss for sublime diction and logical combination, when he wanted to praise his Maker.” Letters, vol. iii. The truth of this cannot be questioned. Language was as necessary to be granted by God to man, as the organs of speech and the rationality of the mind; the latter without the former would have been useless. The purity of that language must have correctly corresponded with the holy ideas which our first parents had of the being and perfections of the Almighty; as well as to give appropriate *names to the fowl of the air, and the beast of the field.* To our first parents the use of this language, for conversing with God, and with one another as social beings, must have constituted a material part of the sacred pleasures of paradise. This felicity, however, was of short

\* Although a learned reader of this lecture may not require an apology, the author thinks it not improper to say, that it was not his intention to use those definitions commonly appropriate in a dissertation on languages, nor to enter into any detail of argument on the priority or diversity of languages; but he has aimed at a *moral* explanation of his subject, in such terms as may edify the plain reader, and not be found altogether disapproved by the more informed understanding.

duration ; for by the introduction of sin, the powers of their minds were corrupted. They no doubt retained ability to converse with each other, but their language failed for converse with God. They had no other ideas of God than as their Creator ; and conscious guilt produced fear, and dictated concealment from his presence. As they had no idea that God was willing or able to save them from the death they had merited, they had no language to address him as their deliverer. God, therefore, must make a *new* revelation, form *new* ideas, and *turn* to our first parents a *new* language, or they must remain for ever silent before HIM whom they had offended. In such a state are the whole of Adam's posterity. Ideas and language may be possessed by them, on the laws of nature, of vegetable and animal creation, and of the circle of the arts ; but it is an indisputable fact, that *the world by wisdom know not God*. Lord Kaims correctly says, "Strength of ideas are necessary to purity of language." No correct ideas are possessed by fallen man of his Maker, much less of a Redeemer. For although there be a general idea and consent among heathen as well as civilized nations, of the existence of a God ; yet the nature of his attributes, his laws, government, and ways, are greatly controverted. No less so, of good and evil, truth and error. *They call evil good, and good evil ; put darkness for light, and light for darkness ; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter*. Corruption of thoughts produces depravity of language. What an early instance of this we have in those who attempted to build the tower of Babel, whose top should reach the sky ; and which provoked God to confound their language, that they were unable to understand each other, and obliged them to abandon their impious design ! David, in strong



terms, describes the depravity of the mind, and the language of sinners. *They imagine mischief in their heart ; they sharpen their tongues like a serpent : adders' poison is under their lips. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.* And are there not too many instances of such prophaneness and infidelity abounding in this age? Are not the grossest errors prevailing, and the most corrupt language employed to depreciate the government of God, and to delude the ignorant? Nay, may we not apply this subject to ourselves? Must we not acknowledge that our natural ideas of God, his law, and even of ourselves, were extremely erroneous? Have we been competent, by the light of nature, to devise ideas and language to call an offended God, "Our Redeemer and portion?" By no means. And this should teach us the necessity of our minds being renewed, and a new language put into our lips. These blessings are promised in our text; and I shall proceed to offer you a short explanation of it, in hope of your instruction.

*I, saith the Lord, will turn unto the people a pure language.* This language, then, is the gift of God; the people shall be made to understand it; it will be found pure in its nature, and productive of the most interesting effects.—The volume in which this language is contained is the BIBLE; and with propriety may be called the language of grace, in contradistinction to that which was natural to Adam in paradise; and because it makes known the riches of God's grace in saving sinners.—In order to learn any language, a capacity must be possessed, and the mind formed to produce ideas. That God gives this capacity to his people, is not only evident from the promise of the text, that God will *turn*; that is,

give them power to understand this pure language ; but from the whole current of Scripture, which describes the work of regeneration and renewing the powers of the mind to be of God. Grace can alone enable a man to understand the language of the Bible. *I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them*, saith the Lord.—To learn a language it is necessary that an instructor be engaged. Such a teacher is Jesus Christ ; whose prerogative it is, by the Spirit, *to open* the understanding, that we might know the Scripture, and have its truth sealed upon the soul. Happy are they who, like Mary, *set at the feet of Jesus and hear his word*.—The language of grace, like all others, consists of various parts. Therefore, we read of *the first principles of the oracles of God*. Such as the total ruin of mankind by sin ; the person of Jesus God-man ; the completeness of redemption by his blood ; justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ ; regeneration, faith, repentance and love ; communion with God by the Holy Ghost : these I may call the first rudiments of Christianity. As from the knowledge of the first principles of a language, we go on to their combination and application ; it is equally so in the school of Christ. Thus Paul exhorted the believing Hebrews : *Therefore*, said he, *leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection*. There is not only an advance in the *theory* of this language of grace, as describing the truth, promises, institutions, and ways of God, but a *practical application* of it under all the sufferings, temptations, and duties of life ; particularly against the errors and corruptions of men, that the mind may be well furnished with a *form of sound words*, able to resist gain-sayers, and that their hope may not be ashamed.—Certain ends

are always proposed by learning a language. They are to converse with others, and be the mean of instructing the ignorant. Those who are taught the language of grace, are certainly enabled to converse with God in that new and endearing relation he sustains as an everlasting Father in Christ Jesus. O how sweet the appropriating language of faith to cry, Abba Father! They who know the language of grace can converse with each other, let them be of what nation or clime they may. However, it must be added, this experimental language of the heart is a mere jargon to the world; or, as Paul expresses it, *it is foolishness to the carnal mind*. There are some who are taught the language of the Gospel, who by Christ are employed as means to promote the instruction of others. Thus Solomon says, *The tongue of the just is as choice silver. The lips of the righteous feed many*. Here let me remark, it is possible for a person to make great acquisitions in human science, and pass through a course of theological studies in order to enter the public ministry, when his mind may not have been taught one lesson at the feet of Jesus. No one more highly estimates the value of education than myself; and it is my opinion, good learning in a Minister will never be despised by any except those who may have had no opportunity to acquire it; or, which is more generally the case, who have no capacity to receive it. I make these observations purposely, that, should this lecture be read in the hearing of any one designed for the ministry, it may have some salutary influence. No Minister can have too much learning; but it is indispensably necessary that God first teach him the language of grace. Without this, I am bold to assert, the ministerial character will eventu-

ally be his misfortune, and he himself will become a source of unhappiness to his people. But where the language of grace precedes human acquirements, it always makes them shine the brighter, renders the possessor more humble and useful, and is employed to the honour of the Saviour.

Having named two purposes for which a person may be taught a language in application to the language of grace, it is highly necessary I should direct your attention to those important designs which God hath promised in the text. They are two. *That they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve the Lord with one consent.* I think this may include what we call personal and social religion. To call upon the name of the Lord, is a privilege and a blessing which comprehend the substance of our spiritual enjoyments; and never fail, more or less, to be experienced by all to whom the Lord teaches the language of the Gospel.—To serve the Lord with one consent necessarily implies a social compact, or a unity of faith, love and practice. Thus we are informed in the history of the primitive Church, that *the multitude that believed were of one heart and of one soul; that they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* Indeed, this union is indispensably necessary to communion. Where there is no unity in faith and love, social pleasure and harmony cannot be enjoyed. But when, as Paul says, *all speak the same thing; that is, converse in the language of the Gospel, the pleasures of Christian fellowship can only be exceeded by a union with the Church triumphant in glory!*—Permit me also to add, next to the pleasures of Christian communion in the Church, may be named the felicity of a family.



For the individuals of an household to learn from Jesus the language of grace, how charmingly must it soften their passions, and direct them in their various departments! Give me leave, therefore, to wish that every member of this family, and particularly the younger part of it, may be taught the *pure language* of the Gospel; that they may morning and evening *call upon the name of the Lord*; and, in their various relations and duties, *serve the Lord with one consent*.

A few observations on the *purity* of this language shall close our discourse. It may, in the text, be called *pure*, in opposition to the depravity of that which may justly be called the corrupt language of fallen sinners. It is certainly *pure*, as it is inspired by the Holy Spirit; as it leads to God, and forms the heart for the practice of virtue. Upon these accounts David said, *Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it*. But I will add, this language is certainly *pure*, for it never deceived any who were taught it. And it is worthy to be remarked, that when by age and infirmity a man may forget his early acquisitions of academic learning, and many occurrences of his past life, the language of grace can be preserved fresh upon his mind, and employ his lips in his latest hours. This was verified in David; and, should we be preserved to good old age, may we have the felicity with him, to say,—*O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also, when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not: until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come*.



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## LECTURE LII.

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### A MEMORIAL OF THE DIVINE BENEFICENCE.

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#### PSALM ciii. 2.

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*

Bless, O my soul, the God of grace;  
His favours claim thy highest praise:  
Why should the wonders he hath wrought  
Be lost in silence and forgot?

*Watts.*

**G**RATITUDE is one of the sweetest emotions of the human soul. But when we have a due sensibility of the unmerited beneficence of God, through Jesus Christ, it is impossible we should refrain from those expressions of gratitude and adoration which engage the powers of the soul in sweetest harmony. *Unthankful, unholy*, is a scripture characteristic of the unregenerate state of man. Where ingratitude prevails, the heart is contaminated with vice, and estranged from God. Those whom God renews in the spirit of their minds, have a perception of the Divine beneficence, and an heart replete with the holy seed of gratitude and praise. David, by the grateful sentiments contained in this excellent Psalm, sufficiently evinces the bounty of God towards him, and that he was one of those happy people whom the Lord hath formed for himself, to show forth his praise. This glow of gratitude certainly may be cherished by our reciting to each other the many valuable instances of God's mercy and goodness to us, notwithstanding our just desert of his anger. There are also times and seasons which have

an agreeable tendency to stimulate our breasts to this delightful work of praise, and to adore the Author of all we enjoy, both in providence and in grace. As we have been so highly favoured as to arrive at our concluding Lecture, I can adopt no subject so appropriate as a review of the Divine beneficence ; and to show you the influence which it should produce upon our hearts and lives.

1. In raising our memorial of the Divine beneficence, I am obliged to acknowledge my incompetency to the work. Its blessings are more rich in their nature, more infinite in number, than the rays of the sun in its meridian brightness ; we are indeed lost in their splendor ! However, let us at least attempt to recollect benefits already conferred ;—acknowledge favours still continued ;—and anticipate blessings held for us in reserve.—Amidst the profusion of benefits already conferred, we must first name the inestimable gift of God's beloved Son Jesus Christ. He assumed our place beneath the violated law, to obey its precepts and to satisfy its penalties, that we might escape the vengeance we deserved. In this adored Saviour is complete redemption ; a fulness of grace ; and a portion of felicity to be enjoyed coeval with eternity. O how richly hath God thus commended his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us ! And those who have felt the virtues of such a Saviour will assuredly exclaim, BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL, AND FORGET NOT THIS INESTIMABLE BENEFIT !—The care of a special providence is the next favour to be named. This guarded you in your infancy, shielded you from dangers to which you were exposed in youth, and prevented you from going down in your sins to the pit of destruction. Ah ! little then, when in ignorance and rebellion, did we perceive or estimate such

a diversified train of blessings as have followed our early life. Here it is highly proper that you should review your past lives, your dangers, sicknesses and transgressions; and likewise the forbearance and the deliverances of your God. All these cannot but enliven your gratitude to God, whose providence has been as a pavilion to preserve you thus far, I hope, for the best purposes. Therefore, the next blessing which I trust the Lord, in rich grace, has bestowed upon some of us, is a **NEW HEART**. This certainly includes all that is intended by regeneration and conversion, without which no man can enter into the kingdom of God. This new heart is ever accompanied with new views of God, Christ, sin, grace, time, eternity; and is always productive of newness of life in obedience to God, and good-will to man. It brings its own evidence that you are a child of God; that your state is changed; and that eventually you shall be transmitted to the realms of bliss.—Great as is the gift of a new heart, some of us can produce a long list of benefits which have followed us in quick succession for many years. Blessings of the upper, and of the nether springs have been copiously opened to us. In darkness, the Lord was our light; when we strayed from his arms, he restored our souls; immersed in sorrow, and surrounded with foes, the Lord was to us a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. O the numberless instances of the preserving, the delivering, and supporting goodness of our God! Could we feel proportionate to these favours, for ourselves and our family connections, how low should we lay in humiliation before the Lord; and how lively and animated would be the expressions of our gratitude for all his benefits conferred!

Let us now acknowledge blessings continued. These are health, the necessities of life, a degree of success in our worldly employ, tranquillity in our social connections: all these are favours worthy to be named: for if you look around, you will certainly find many destitute of what you enjoy, and probably absorbed in sorrow. And if you look within you, you will be convinced you do not merit even your bread and your water; and that every temporal blessing continued to you, is the fruit of God's distinguishing goodness.—There are also benefits of grace continued to you. You have the precious Bible in your hand; the Gospel is preached to you; the throne of grace is still open for your access; and the privileges of Zion invite you. Besides, Christ is to you the same to-day as he was the first moment you tasted his love. It is entirely owing to the Spirit of Christ that you still have any exercise of desire, faith, joy, love; or persevere in the midst of your trials in the discharge of holy duty. If we advert to our present Psalm, we find David made an enumeration of God's benefits to refresh his memory, and influence his heart to praise. He began with spiritual benefits received; *the forgiveness of iniquities, and the healing of infirmities; the redemption of his life from destruction, and God's crowning him with loving-kindness and tender mercies.* He then acknowledged favours continued from the Lord, *who satisfieth his mouth with good things, so that his youth was renewed like the eagle's.* These good things of providence, and the richer things of grace, satisfy the soul as at a banquet of love! All these made the most sensible impression upon David's heart, and produced the most animated sentiments of gratitude from his lips.

We proposed to reflect also on BENEFITS yet in RE-



SERVE. These relate to time and to eternity. God, in his covenant of love, hath laid up a fulness of blessedness in his Son, for all his people, under their various circumstances here, and for their felicity in glory. This covenant, David declared, was *ordered in all things and sure ; and was all his salvation, and all his desire*. We therefore look not forward to what some call accident or chance, but to that *goodness which God has actually laid up for them that fear him*, and which shall be most certainly conferred. Job, being conscious of this, cheerfully resigned all his future concerns into the hand of God, saying, *He performeth the thing that is appointed for me ; and many such things there are with him*. The knowledge of future events God has wisely concealed from us, purposely to keep us humble and dependent upon himself. It is sufficient, therefore, that our unchangeable God hath said, *Verily thou shalt be fed. My grace is sufficient for thee. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Fear not ; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name ; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee : when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned ; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, thy Saviour. Because I live, ye shall live also*, saith the Redeemer ; and *ye shall set down with me on my throne, in my Father's kingdom*. These are precious assurances of what God will yet do for you. And is it possible you can wish, or ask for more ?

2. Let us now, as proposed, show the influence which this review of the Divine beneficence should have upon the heart and life. David called upon his soul, and all



that was within him, to bless the holy name of his God. Indeed, when the soul is enriched by grace, there are principles formed which attune the lips to praise in strains unknown before. To *bless God*, is to adore and praise him for his benefits conferred upon us; for, it is impossible that by human or angelic efforts, any addition should be made to his essential blessedness. This David performed by calling upon his *soul*; that is, exciting himself in the most lively, animated manner to bring to recollection the multiplied favours he had received, and to return grateful acknowledgments to his Divine Benefactor. And what is a very singular expression, he called upon *all that is within him* to engage in the delightful employ; that is, as a CREATURE, he summoned all the natural powers and faculties of his mind, will, and affections, to celebrate his God. As a NEW CREATURE in Christ Jesus, he excited the faith, hope, joy, love, every grace, and every talent wrought in him by the blessed Spirit, to unite in chords of sweetest harmony, to render thanksgiving. Such happy influence, more or less, is felt by every man born of God. There were special seasons in which the ancient worthies expressed their gratitude, and raised a memorial of the Divine beneficence. Good old Jacob, when blessing his grand-children, took the opportunity of acknowledging the care of the Almighty, who *had led him all his life long*. Samuel, after obtaining great deliverance, raised his *Eben-ezer*, saying, *Hitherto the Lord hath helped us*. And Paul, before Agrippa and his splendid court, was not ashamed to declare, that *having obtained help of God, he continued unto this day*. Noble testimonies! Indeed, water may sooner cease to find its own level, or fire to lose its property to burn, than the children of grace can cease to

be thankful. Besides, this grateful exercise produces the most pleasurable sensations of heart. As the excellent Mr. Hervey used to say, "The exercise of gratitude is somewhat like the fragrant steam of consecrated incense in the temple, which, while they honour the great object of worship, regale, with their pleasing perfumes, the devout worshippers."

It is now time for us to conclude our lecture, by returning more immediately to ourselves. I have recited some of the special benefits of God, in Christ, to sinners; and shown the grateful sensibility which they produce upon those who receive them. Let me now ask, what interest you have in the subject; and what memorial you can raise to the beneficence of God? You, no doubt, as individuals, and as a family, have received many instances of the protection and the bounties of indulgent Providence. And it is proper for you, on this occasion, to bring to recollection those special instances of goodness by which you were preserved from imminent danger, or received ample supplies in the midst of sorrow. Surely, gratitude becomes your duty for such benefits; and it is my ardent wish, it may in some degree be proportionate to what you have received!—But I entreat you to examine what portion you have in the richer benefits of grace. Has Christ, the first and greatest gift, been bestowed upon you, so that by faith you have received him as *your* Saviour? Have you been conducted into the sensible presence of God, as your Father, and reposed your soul into his hand? May there be no one here without possessing such sweet enjoyments; and from thence devote your future days to the honour of your Divine Benefactor!

Spared of the Lord, we have now passed through our intended course of fifty-two discourses; and it well be-

comes us to make the review, and to return our acknowledgments. I beg leave, on this occasion, to raise my humble memorial to the beneficence of my God, who hath preserved me in life; gave me grace in my youth; supported me through storms of deep distress; continued me in his ministry for so many years, and enabled me to finish this volume as a testimony of my attachment to the truths of the Gospel, and my wish to contribute to the benefit of my fellow creatures. These inestimable favours to me, who am the most unworthy, are sufficient to demand my humble praise. Should these lectures be the mean of bringing any sinners to Christ, or of instructing, comforting, or supporting those who happily know him; I beseech you to render thanksgiving to God, to whom it is most justly due. The greatest return I can possibly ask from you, is an interest in your earnest prayers, that the few remaining days of my life may be spent in communion with God, and in greater usefulness to mankind.—As individuals, and as a family, *I now commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.* Let us then conclude with the most grateful emotions of soul, expressed in the language of the three last verses of this most excellent Psalm. *Bless the Lord, ye his Angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul.*

FINIS.

A  
COLLECTION  
OF  
HYMNS,

APPROPRIATE TO THE DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN.

BY JOHN STANFORD, M. A.

---

Thy Statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.  
*King David.*

---

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A

## COLLECTION OF HYMNS.

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### HYMN I. L. M.

*Domestic Felicity.*

FATHER of all, thy care we bless,  
Which crowns our families with peace ;  
From thee they spring, and by thy hand  
Their root and branches are sustain'd.

To God, most worthy to be prais'd,  
Be our domestic altars rais'd ;  
The Lord of heaven scorns not to dwell  
With saints in their obscurest cell.

To thee may each united house  
Present their night and morning vows ;  
Our servants and our rising race  
Be taught thy precepts and thy grace.

May every future age proclaim  
The honours of thy glorious name ;  
When we from earth shall be remov'd  
To join the family above.

*Doddridge.*

### HYMN II. C. M.

*Christ the Alpha and Omega.*

HAIL, *Alpha* and *Omega*, hail !  
Thou author of our faith ;  
The finisher of all our hopes,  
The truth, the life, the path.

Hail, *first* and *last*, thou great I AM !  
In whom we live and move ;  
Increase our little stock of faith,  
And fill our hearts with love.

O let that *truth* which thou hast taught  
 Be treasured in our breast ;  
 The evidence of unseen joys,  
 The substance of our rest.

Then shall we go from strength to strength,  
 From grace to greater grace ;  
 From one degree of faith to more,  
 Till we behold thy face.

*Moravian Col.*

### HYMN III. L. M.

#### *The Religion of the Heart.*

DEAD is the saint, dead is that soul,  
 Whom Jesus slays to make him whole ;  
 Dead to the world, and dead to sin,  
 Dead to the law, and self within.

Tho' dead, yet lives, and lives secure,  
 His life is hid, and therefore sure ;  
 He lives with Christ, with Christ in God ;  
 He lives in peace, yet lives by blood.

His life is hid from carnal eye,  
 'Tis hid secure with God on high :  
 Beyond the reach of foe and fiend,  
 'Tis hid with Christ, the sinner's friend.

Satan may rage, the world annoy,  
 But neither can this life destroy ;  
 That's safely lodg'd in Jesus' breast,  
 The sinner's refuge,—Christian's rest.

Rejoice, believer ; saints, be glad ;  
 Why thus cast down, and why so sad ?  
 Rejoice in this, your life's secure,  
 Tho' men may rage, and devils roar.

Rejoice, 'tis hid with Christ in God ;  
 Rejoice, e'en under Jesu's rod :  
 Rejoice you live, rejoice you're dead,  
 Rejoice in Christ, your living head.

*Price.*

## HYMN IV. C. M.

*The Happy Sabbath.*

THIS is the day the Lord hath made,  
 His name will we adore ;  
 This is the day the Saviour rose,  
 And made salvation sure.

This is the day that's set apart,  
 That all the saints may trace  
 Their living,—dying,—rising Lord,  
 The glorious Prince of Peace.

Lord, may we praise the Sabbath day,  
 Thy house may we revere ;  
 Drawn by the great Redeemer's love,  
 And not by slavish fear.

This is the day we wait to see  
 Christ on a Gospel pole ;  
 Prove it the Sabbath of the Lord,  
 The Sabbath of the soul.

And when we leave thine earthly courts,  
 To heav'n may we ascend ;  
 There the sweet Sabbath of the Lord  
 Shall never, never end.

*Burnham.*

## HYMN V. L. M.

*Advice to Young Men.*

DAVID, with heav'nly wisdom fraught,  
 His kind paternal care express'd ;  
 Resulting from deliberate thought,  
 Thus Solomon, his son, address'd :

My son, know thou thy father's God,  
 And serve him with a perfect heart ;  
 Mark thou the steps my feet have trod,  
 And never from the rule depart.

His statutes keep with willing mind,  
The precepts which his word unfold ;  
For he who hath the same enjoin'd,  
The secrets of all hearts behold.

But if thine heart forsake his way,  
And make him not thy chief delight ;  
Hear what the God of truth doth say,  
"He'll cast thee ever from his sight."

Offspring and root of David, THOU,  
The bright and morning star, arise !  
Thy power the stubborn will can bow,  
And make me to salvation wise.

Bereft of all my native power,  
I bow, I fall before thy face ;  
Dependent on thee, every hour,  
My only refuge is thy grace.

If grace can fail, then I must fall ;  
No plea but grace can I present ;  
My gracious God, my all in all,  
Grant me but grace, and I'm content.

*Cobby.*

#### HYMN VI. C. M.

##### *Unparalleled Sufferings of Christ.*

LORD, why so freely shed thy blood ?  
My soul inquires to know ;  
Why did the sacred crimson flood  
In such profusion flow ?

Could not a single drop atone,  
And all-sufficient prove ?  
Its efficacious worth alone  
A world of guilt remove ?

Why did the plowers on thy back,  
Like furrows make it part ?  
And cruel tyrants wound, and rack,  
And rend thy tender heart ?

Could nought but this their hate assuage,  
 The Lord of life to slay?  
 To treat thee with infernal rage,  
 And take thy life away?

"Inquiring soul, the reason know,  
 "I bled upon the tree:  
 "'Twas that I might my mercy show,  
 "'Twas all for love to thee."

*Cobby*

## HYMN VII. L. M.

*Christ a Prophet.*

GREAT prophet of the ransom'd race,  
 We look to thee to be supply'd;  
 On thee our faith and hope we place,  
 To teach, illuminate and guide.

A teacher sent from God thou art,  
 O make us to salvation wise;  
 'The heav'nly truths thy lips impart  
 In all their native lustre rise.

Dark in ourselves, we need thy light,  
 We wait to feel thy quick'ning ray;  
 Thy beams dispel the clouds of night,  
 And usher in the Gospel day.

Conduct us through the desert land,  
 By day our cloud, our fire by night;  
 And let thy out-stretch'd potent hand  
 Turn all our num'rous foes to flight.

Instruct in all thy righteous will,  
 On thee for all our hopes depend;  
 Thy great prophetic work fulfil,  
 And guide us to our journey's end.

Above the narrow bounds of time,  
 Thus taught by thee our hopes shall rise,  
 On Contemplation's ladder climb  
 To our great Prophet in the skies.

*Cobby.*



## HYMN VIII. L. M.

*The Love of Life moderated.*

W OULD not always live below,  
Through this dark wilderness to roam;  
I loathe the thought, and long to go  
And take possession of my home.

Ten thousand cares possess my breast,  
Ten thousand objects claim my heart;  
But I shall soon enjoy my rest,  
And with the world for ever part.

To see thy glory, Lord, appear,  
And sinners fly to thy dear arms,  
Holds back my soul, nor lets me fly  
To take my mansion in the sky.

Yet my appointed time I'll wait,  
Until my glorious change shall come,  
To call me from my pilgrim state  
To my belov'd, eternal home.

O glorious hope ! I there shall see  
The glorious Lord that for me died,  
Enthron'd in splendid majesty,  
And seated at his Father's side.

*Cobby.*

## HYMN IX. C. M.

*Vine and Branches.*

L ORD of the vineyard, we adore  
That pow'r and grace divine,  
Which plants our wild, our barren souls  
In Christ, the living vine.

For ever may they there abide,  
And from that vital root  
Be influence spread thro' ev'ry branch,  
To form and feed the fruit.

Shine forth, my God, the clusters warm  
 With rays of sacred love ;  
 Till Eden's soil, and Zion's streams  
 The gen'rous plant improve.

*Doddridge.*

## HYMN X. C. M.

### *Fatherly Chastisement.*

AS tender parents chide with care  
 The sons they dearly love,  
 And gladly would correction spare,  
 While all their bowels move :

So are the chast'nings of the Lord  
 On all his chosen race ;  
 His visitations still afford  
 Fresh tokens of his grace.

When first their wand'ring footsteps err,  
 He watches to reclaim ;  
 And all the strokes they're call'd to bear  
 Are laid with this kind aim.

In faithfulness he strikes betimes,  
 Yet moderates their griefs ;  
 Their frame remembers with their crimes,  
 And meditates relief.

With great compassion thus he'll chide  
 The children of his heart ;  
 And when their souls are purify'd,  
 Will bid the rod depart.

His loving-kindness firm shall stand,  
 For those he will chastise :  
 Sink not, my soul, beneath his hand,  
 Nor his rebukes despise.

*Wallin.*

## HYMN XI. L. M.

*Death a Sleep.*

**D**EAREST of names, our Lord, our King !  
 Jesus, thy praise we humbly sing ;  
 In cheerful songs will spend our breath,  
 And in thee triumph over death.

Death is no more among our foes,  
 Since Christ the mighty conqueror rose ;  
 Both power and sting the Saviour broke,  
 He dy'd, and gave the final stroke.

Saints die, and we should gently weep ;  
 Sweetly in Jesu's arms they sleep,  
 Far from this world of sin and woe ;  
 Nor sin, nor pain, nor grief, they know.

Death is a sleep, and O how sweet  
 To souls prepar'd its stroke to meet !  
 Their dying beds, their graves are bless'd,  
 For all to them is peace and rest.

Their bodies sleep, their souls take wing,  
 Uprise to heaven, and there they sing  
 With joy, before the Saviour's face,  
 Triumphant in victorious grace.

O may I live with Jesus nigh,  
 And sleep in Jesus when I die ;  
 Then joyful, when from death I wake,  
 I shall eternal bliss partake.

*Medly.*

## HYMN XII. C. M.

*The Lively Christian.*

**M**OST glorious Saviour, and our God,  
 Help us thy name to praise ;  
 Redeem'd we are through precious blood,  
 And made alive through grace.

Inflame our hearts with holy zeal,  
And pure celestial fire ;  
To honour all thy righteous will  
Is what we most desire.

The spirit of our fathers give,  
Who nobly stood for God ;  
In persecution's flame did live,  
And seal'd the truth with blood.

O never let our love grow cold,  
Nor flaming zeal expire ;  
For grace and truth may we be bold,  
Inflam'd with heavenly fire.

Through faith and hope, and life and love,  
O may we sweetly rise,  
Soaring through grace to things above,  
To grasp th' eternal prize.

C.

### HYMN XIII. C. M.

*The best Robe.*

NOW for a wondrous song,  
(Keep distance, ye profane ;  
Be silent each unhallow'd tongue,  
Nor turn the truth to bane :)

The prodigal's return'd ;  
Th' apostate bold and base ;  
That all his father's counsels spurn'd,  
And long abused his grace.

What treatment since he came?  
Love, tenderly exprest ;  
What robe is brought to hide his shame?  
The best—the very best.

Ye elder sons be still,  
Give no vile passion vent :  
My brethren, 'tis our father's will,  
And you must be content.

All that he has is yours ;  
 Rejoice, and not repine :  
 That love that all *your* states secures,  
 That love has alter'd *mine*.

Good God ! are these thy ways ?  
 If rebels thus are freed,  
 And favour'd with peculiar grace,  
 Grace must be free indeed !

*Hart.*

#### HYMN XIV. L. M.

##### *The Ring.*

BEHOLD ! a prodigal in tears !  
 He loathes the swine, nor husks can eat ;  
 Remorse his tortur'd bosom tears,  
 And lays him famish'd at thy feet.

See, Lord, the exile from afar,  
 Returns, his father's house to seek ;  
 Ah ! manifest a parent's care,  
 And fall around the wand'rer's neck.

Give me the welcome kiss of peace,  
 My naked soul with robes adorn ;  
 Give me the robe of righteousness,  
 By none but favour'd children worn.

The precious ring of endless love,  
 On me, my gracious God, bestow :  
 I'll then rejoice with those above,  
 And all thy will perform below.

Needy, unclean, and vile and poor,  
 Deepest distress my state attends ;  
 Begg not my soul at any door  
 But thine, which prodigals befriends.

I hear that those who ask receive,  
 That those who seek are sure to find ;  
 That those who knock shall entrance have,  
 And prove the Lord is good and kind.



## HYMN XV. C. M.

*The two Resurrections.*

THE praise of Christ ye Christians sound,  
 His mighty acts be told ;  
 Death has receiv'd a mortal wound ;  
 He takes—but cannot hold.

Believers in their darksome graves  
 Shall start, to light restor'd ;  
 Forsake their monumental caves,  
 And mount to meet the Lord.

Not long in ground the dying grain  
 Is hid, or lies forlorn ;  
 But soon revives, and springs again,  
 And comes to standing corn.

So, waking from the womb of earth,  
 Where Christ has lain before,  
 And bursting to a better birth,  
 We rise to die no more.

The wicked too shall rise again :  
 The difference will be this :  
 They rise to everlasting pain,  
 And saints to endless bliss.

*Hart.*

## HYMN XVI. C. M.

*Humility.*

HUMILITY the Lord beholds  
 With an approving eye ;  
 In humble souls he doth delight,  
 For such on him rely.

In their own eyes they nothing seem,  
 For Christ is their great *All* ;  
 And 'tis their highest happiness  
 Before his cross to fall.

Thou lowly Jesus, give us all  
 Our sinfulness to see ;  
 Not in ourselves we dare to boast,  
 But humbly boast in thee.

What hast thou promis'd, dearest Lord,  
 To humble spirits here ?  
 'Tis to bestow the choicest good,  
 And dry the flowing tear.

Lord, conquer pride, that vilest sin ;  
 Bid all its power depart ;  
 May we all tread thy sacred paths,  
 In lowliness of heart.

Conform us more like saints above,  
 Who all thy glory see ;  
 Who cast their crowns before thy feet,  
 And lose themselves in thee.

*Burnham.*

## HYMN XVII. C. M.

*Christ a Priest.*

OUR great High Priest atonement made,  
 To expiate our guilt ;  
 The law fulfill'd, the ransom paid,  
 When his rich blood was spilt.

The types and shadows fled away  
 At his superior light ;  
 So sol's bright beams the op'ning day,  
 Dispel the shades of night.

Ten thousand beasts on altars slain,  
 With seas of flowing blood,  
 The sinner's pardon could not gain,  
 Or bring one soul to God.

A nobler sacrifice than they  
 Our great High Priest provide,  
 Stern justice did the victim slay,  
 And seeks for none beside.

In him a righteousness complete,  
Light and perfections shine ;  
And wisdom, grace, and glory meet  
A Saviour all divine !

*Cobby.*

HYMN XVIII. C. M.

*The Trial of the Heart.*

RETIRED from the world and noise,  
My busy heart inquires,  
What is the bent of all thy joys,  
The scope of thy desires ?

Come they from heav'n, celestial Dove ?  
Or come they, earth, from thee ?  
By sacred truth its source I'll prove,  
And by its tendings see.

Great God, thy penetrating eye  
Surveys what mortals do ;  
And all the creatures thou hast made  
Stand open to thy view.

No darkness can from thee conceal,  
For day and night are thine ;  
Thou know'st the actions I perform,  
The things that I design.

Who can thy powerful hand escape,  
Or from thy presence flee ?  
Nothing I think, or say, or do,  
Can be conceal'd from thee.

Then search and try my inmost soul,  
And form it all anew ;  
Sow there the seeds of ev'ry grace,  
And ev'ry lust subdue.

*Beddome.*

## HYMN XIX. C. M.

*Law of Faith.*

SPRUNG up from Adam's guilty seed,  
 A sinful wretched race;  
 With hell beneath, and wrath o'er head,  
 A dreadful, helpless case!

Fast in the curses, wrath and death,  
 A broken law demands;  
 Which breathes for us no other breath  
 Than curses and commands.

In this sad plight, see mercy shines,  
 God hath a ransom found;  
 His Son, his Son hath for our sins  
 With his own blood aton'd—

His Son, who on the cursed tree  
 For all our sins was slain,  
 That from the law we might be free,  
 For ever free remain.

Married to him, to him we live,  
 His purchase and his spouse;  
 From him all blessings we receive,  
 And to him pay our vows.

Blest union! glorious liberty!  
 What higher, sweeter wish?  
 To be from death and hell set free,  
 To reign in endless bliss.

In him we serve the law of love,  
 In fruits of holiness:  
 Our hearts the law of faith approve,  
 As truth and righteousness.

O precious Jesus, how divine  
 Are all thy acts of grace!  
 How strange, thy heart should e'er incline  
 Such rebels to embrace!

*Wallin.*

HYMN XX. 7's.

*God is Love.*

LOVE! how charming is the sound,  
O, what joys in it abound;  
Sweetest grace, below, above,  
Sweetest name, for God is love.

Its divine and heavenly flame  
Stands exprest in Jesu's name:  
Jesus left his throne above,  
Jesus, God of boundless love.

Dearest Saviour, shed abroad  
In my soul, this love of God;  
Not to friends alone confin'd,  
But diffus'd to all mankind.

May this grace resplendent shine  
In each thought and word of mine;  
May my ev'ry action prove  
I possess this precious love.

Love! what bliss the sound conveys!  
'Tis a source of endless praise,  
'Tis perfection's height above,  
All in all, for God is love.

*Cobby.*

HYMN XXI. C. M.

*The afflicted Youth brought to Christ.*

JESUS, we own thy saving pow'r,  
And thy victorious hand;  
Hell's legions tremble at thy feet,  
And fly at thy command.

O'er souls, by passion's uproar fill'd  
With anarchy unknown.  
The nobler pow'rs restor'd by thee,  
Ascend their peaceful throne.



No more they rend their cloathing off,  
 No more their wounds repeat ;  
 But gentle and compos'd they wait  
 Attentive at thy feet.

O'er thousands more, where Satan rules,  
 May we such triumphs see ;  
 And be their rescu'd souls and ours  
 Devoted, Lord, to thee.

*Doddridge.*

### HYMN XXII. C. M.

*Young Christian under the Emblem of a Lamb.*

THY flock, with what a tender care,  
 Blest Jesus, dost thou keep ?  
 Fain would my weak, my wand'ring soul  
 Be number'd with thy sheep.

Gentle, and tractable, and plain,  
 My heart would ever be,  
 Averse to harm, propense to help,  
 And faithful still to thee.

The gentle accents of thy voice,  
 My list'ning soul would hear,  
 And by the signals of thy will,  
 I all my course would steer.

I follow where my Shepherd leads,  
 And mark the path he drew ;  
 My Shepherd's feet Mount Zion treads,  
 And I shall reach it too.

*Doddridge.*

### HYMN XXIII. C. M.

*The moral Character of Christ.*

YE saints below, with those above,  
 Join in harmonious praise ;  
 Come celebrate the Saviour's love,  
 Sing his eternal praise.

His boundless love, his matchless fame  
 With melody rehearse ;  
 And let the glories of his name  
 Enrich your flowing verse.

Come cast your crowns before his feet,  
 Your all to him resign ;  
 The center where perfections meet,  
 Both moral and divine.

His riches through eternal day  
 We never can explore ;  
 His love ten thousand charms display,  
 His grace ten thousand more.

*Cobby.*

#### HYMN XXIV. L. M.

##### *The Divinity of Christ.*

FOR a seraph's flaming tongue,  
 To tell what my Redeemer's done,  
 To show the people all his worth,  
 And set the wondrous Saviour forth !

Could I but paint his beaut'ous name,  
 Or draw the outlines of his fame,  
 The world would sure enamour'd be,  
 Nor one deny his DEITY.

Compell'd by his redeeming love,  
 He left the blissful choirs above ;  
 Elop'd from those triumphant lays,  
 Which constant echo forth his praise.

Down to this lower world he came,  
 To bear the guilty sinner's shame,  
 And carry all that weight of woe,  
 Which none but God could undergo.

He soon will bid th' Archangel come,  
 To blow his trump, and call us home ;  
 His favourites then shall mount above,  
 And bask for ever in his love.

For love like this, ye saints arise  
 Superior to all earthly ties,  
 Proclaim the Saviour's praise abroad,  
 And magnify the Triune God.

G. M.

# HYMN XXV. C. M.

*Assurance of Salvation.*

JESUS, my all in earth and heav'n,  
 My life, my hope, my love ;  
 I long to know my sins forgiven,  
 The witness from above.

O for a sight, a sight of thee,  
 My waiting spirit cries ;  
 How welcome would the visit be,  
 And feast these drooping eyes !

But if a sign must be deny'd,  
 The pow'r of faith impart ;  
 That I am freely justify'd,  
 And seal it on my heart.

The sacred pages through each line  
 The grace to man proclaim,  
 A God's compassion how divine !  
 What glory fills thy name !

O how I long to read, and say,  
 This grace to me is given ;  
 To know the life, the truth, the way,  
 And follow him to heav'n.

*Langly.*

# HYMN XXVI. L. M.

*The Silent Sabbath.*

THE fabric of nature is fair,  
 But fairer the temple of grace ;  
 To saints 'tis the joy of the earth,  
 O glorious, beautiful place.

To this temple I once did resort,  
 With crowds of the people of God;  
 Enraptur'd we enter'd its courts,  
 And hail'd the Redeemer's abode.

Sweet moments ! if ought upon earth  
 Resemble the joys of the skies,  
 'Tis thus when the hearts of the flock  
 Conjoin'd to the Shepherd arise.

But ah ! these sweet moments are fled,  
 My duty compels me to stay  
 Where no voice of the turtle is heard,  
 As the moments are hasting away.

My God ! Thou art holy and good,  
 Thy plans are all righteous and wise ;  
 O help me submissive to wait  
 Till thou bidest thy servant arise.

Or should'st thou in bondage detain,  
 To visit thy temple no more,  
 Prepare me for mansions above,  
 Where nothing exists to deplore.

*S. Pearce.*

## HYMN XXVII. L. M.

### *The Being of God.*

COME meditate the great I AM,  
 What glories fill the wondrous name !  
 The human, th' angelic line  
 In vain would sound the depths divine.

Now self-existence strikes the eye ;  
 In his own peerless majesty  
 He dwells, and asks support from none,  
 While worlds depend upon his throne.

Eternity, that ne'er begun,  
 And shall through endless ages run,  
 Only belongs to Deity,  
 Who was, and is, and still shall be.

His potent arm his works sustains,  
 And o'er them all supreme he reigns,  
 Unseen, unheard, yet all abroad  
 Through boundless space a present God.

With veneration most profound,  
 From world to world his praise resound ;  
 But still thy name can ne'er be shown,  
 Thou infinitely great Unknown !

G. M.

# HYMN XXVIII. C. M.

## *Authenticity of the Bible.*

O GOD, thy being I adore,  
 Thy faithfulness I'll hail ;  
 Thy providence my compass is,  
 And where that points I'll sail.

My soul shall bless thee all my days  
 For thy unchanging word ;  
 This word demands my highest praise,  
 O bless the faithful Lord.

This word ensures my present good,  
 And future blessings too ;  
 Lead then, my Father, with thy rod,  
 Thy staff shall bear me through.

O may thy Spirit cleanse my heart  
 From the most secret faults,  
 And by thy grace assist my soul  
 To check rebellious thoughts.

Impious and vain such conduct is,  
 O Lord I own my guilt ;  
 My hope is in the Saviour's blood  
 On Calvary's summit spilt.

G. M.



## HYMN XXIX. L. M.

*Christ a Physician.*

WHY droops my soul, with guilt oppress'd?  
 Why these wild tumults in my breast?  
 Is there no balm to heal my wound?  
 No kind Physician to be found?

Yes, in the Gospel's faithful lines  
 Jehovah's grace and mercy shines;  
 There dress'd in love, the Saviour stands,  
 With pitying heart, and wooing hands.

Raise to the cross thy weeping eyes;  
 Behold, the Prince of glory dies!  
 He dies extended on the tree;  
 Thence sheds a sov'reign balm for me.

Dear Saviour, at thy feet I lie,  
 Here to receive a cure, or die;  
 But love forbids that painful fear,  
 And grace, that reigns triumphant here.

Thou wilt extract the poison'd dart,  
 Bind up and heal the broken heart;  
 With blooming health my soul adorn,  
 And chase this gloomy night with morn.

Now give a loose, my soul, to joy;  
 Hosannas be thy best employ,  
 Salvation thy eternal theme,  
 And swell the song with Jesu's name.

G. M.

## HYMN XXX. L. M.

*The burning Brand extricated.*

OF Jesus I sing, now reigning above,  
 And to him I bring this tribute of love;  
 For, O, I desire his love to commend,  
 Who me from the fire pluck'd out as a brand.

He saw the disgrace and shame I lay in,  
 Yet mercy took place, and pardon'd my sin:  
 Sure I must admire the wonderful hand  
 Which me *from the fire pluck'd out as a brand.*

Polluted and black with horrible guilt,  
 Yet he for my sake his precious blood spilt;  
 My soul now aspire, to praise the dear friend  
 Who thee *from the fire pluck'd out as a brand.*

O, what hath he done, my soul to set free!  
 Of sinners not one more favour'd than me;  
 Well may he require my heart and my hand,  
 Who me *from the fire pluck'd out as a brand.*

Still, Lord, let me live, thy mercy to prove,  
 And still to me give supplies from above;  
 'To thee my desire shall daily ascend,  
 Who me *from the fire pluck'd out as a brand.*

The time will soon come, when I shall appear  
 In heaven, my home, and worship thee there;  
 In glorious attire, before thee I'll stand,  
 Who me *from the fire pluck'd out as a brand.*

*Medly.*

### HYMN XXXI. C. M.

#### *Throne of Grace.*

**G**REAT God! to us assembled here  
 Reveal thy smiling face,  
 While we with holy love and fear  
 Approach the *throne of grace.*

With holy boldness may we come,  
 Though of a sinful race,  
 Joyful to find there yet is room  
 Before the *throne of grace.*

Our earnest, fervent cry attend,  
 And all our faith increase,  
 While we our heavenly Friend address  
 Upon a *throne of grace.*

His tender pity and his love  
 Our numerous fears shall chase,  
 And all our help we then shall prove  
 Comes from the *throne of grace*.

Dear Lord ! our many wants supply,  
 Attend to every case,  
 While humbled in the dust we lie  
 Before the *throne of grace*.

We bless thee for thy word and laws ;  
 We bless thee for thy peace ;  
 And we do bless thee, Lord, because  
 There is a *throne of grace*.

*Medley.*

# HYMN XXXII. C. M.

*Comparison between the Resurrection of Christ and the  
 Conversion of a Sinner.*

“ I AM,” saith Christ, “ your glorious head,”  
 May we attention give,  
 The resurrection of the dead,  
 The life of all that live.

By faith in me the soul receives  
 New life, though dead before ;  
 And he that in my name believes,  
 Shall live, to die no more.

The sinner, sleeping in his grave,  
 Shall at my voice awake ;  
 And when I once begin to save,  
 My work I ne'er forsake.

Fulfil thy promise, gracious Lord,  
 On us assembled here ;  
 Put forth thy Spirit with the word,  
 And cause the dead to hear.

Thy pow'r and mercy first prevail'd,  
 From death to set us free ;  
 And often since our life had fail'd,  
 If not renew'd by thee.

'To thee we look, to thee we bow,  
 To thee for help we call ;  
 Our life and resurrection thou,  
 Our hope, our joy, our all.

*Newton.*

### HYMN XXXIII. L. M.

*Christ a Shepherd.*

**I**N humble strains of praise and love,  
 Now let the saints address their King ;  
 Let all their hearts ascend above,  
 And Jesus, their great SHEPHERD, sing.

The great, the kind, the wise, the good,  
 The only Shepherd Jesus is :  
 He for the flock paid down his blood ;  
 By ev'ry tie they must be his.

He feeds them with a Shepherd's care,  
 He guides them with a watchful eye ;  
 The lambs his love and pity share ;  
 His arm, his bosom, still is night.

The weary, weak, and burden'd soul,  
 He gently leads to heav'nly rest ;  
 His love shall ev'ry fear control,  
 And in his love they shall be blest.

Dear Shepherd, feed and guide us too,  
 And never from thee let us stray ;  
 Still let us keep thy love in view,  
 And joyfully go on our way.

*Medley.*

### HYMN XXXIV. S. M.

*Morning Devotion.*

**A**GAIN from sleep I wake,  
 The morning light to view ;  
 Again, my soul, thyself betake,  
 Thy duty to pursue,

How great the power divine  
That form'd yon glorious sun,  
Taught him so radiantly to shine,  
So swift a course to run !

Let this direct my eyes  
To a sublimer theme ;  
A sun which radiates loftier skies,  
With a far brighter beam.

This sun was once eclips'd,  
To give thee greater light ;  
And awfully in shape was wrap'd,  
To bring an end to night.

But now he shines and reigns  
In glorious beams array'd ;  
And grief, and sin, and tort'ring pains  
Are from his presence fled.

Be thou my sun, O Lord,  
And guide my path to-day ;  
Nor from the precepts of thy word  
Permit my feet to stray.

L. G.

# HYMN XXXV. L. M.

*The Root of the Matter.*

ALL hail, thou great Emmanuel !  
Thy love, thy glory, who can tell ?  
Angels, and all the heav'nly host  
Are in the boundless prospect lost.

Mortals, with reverential songs,  
Take his clear name upon your tongues ;  
With holy fear attempt his praise,  
In solemn, yet triumphant lays.

Among a thousand forms of love,  
In which he shines and smiles above,  
This, with peculiar joy we view,  
He's David's root and offspring too.



There Jesus, in the glorious plan,  
Shines the great God, the wondrous man !  
As God, the root of all our bliss ;  
As man, the branch of righteousness.

As grafted on this heav'nly root,  
O may we live, and bring forth fruit ;  
And, under this dear branch of love,  
Safety, and shade, and comfort prove.

All hail, thou dear redeeming Lord !  
All hail, thou co-essential word !  
All hail, thou root and branch divine !  
All hail ! and be the glory thine.

*S. Medley.*

# HYMN XXXVI. L. M.

*Knowledge of the Love of Christ.*

TO know my Jesus crucify'd  
By far exceeds all things beside ;  
All earthly good I count but loss,  
And triumph in my Saviour's cross.

O could I know and love him more,  
And all his wondrous grace explore,  
Ne'er would I covet man's esteem,  
But part with all and follow him.

Although my trials shall increase,  
Ne'er may I wish their number less ;  
But e'er be bold in thy great cause,  
And feel my heav'n in thine applause.

Thus make me willing, glorious Lamb,  
To suffer all things for thy name,  
At last be where my Jesus is,  
And rise to everlasting bliss.

*Burnham.*

## HYMN XXXVII. L. M.

*Christ more precious than the Gold of Ophir.*

JESUS "is precious," says the word ;  
 What comfort does this truth afford !  
 And those who in his name believe,  
 With joy this precious truth receive.

Not health, nor wealth, nor sounding fame,  
 Nor earth's deceitful, empty name,  
 With all its pomp, and all its glare,  
 Can with a precious Christ compare.

In every office he sustains,  
 In every victory he gains,  
 In every council of his will,  
 He's precious to his people still.

In every trial by the way,  
 In every dark and stormy day,  
 In all their sorrows and complaints,  
 He's precious still to all his saints.

As they draw near their journey's end,  
 How precious is their heav'nly friend !  
 And when in death they bow their head,  
 He's precious on a dying bed.

This sleeping dust shall one day rise,  
 All glorious to their wond'ring eyes ;  
 And when they at his bar appear,  
 A precious Christ will bless them there.

Among them, Lord, may I be found,  
 And with thy precious mercy crown'd ;  
 Join the sweet song, and there adore  
 A precious Christ for evermore.

*Medley.*

## HYMN XXXVIII. C. M.

*Contentment.*

**FIERCE** passions discompose the mind,  
 As tempests vex the sea ;  
 But calm content and peace we find,  
 When, Lord, we turn to thee.

In vain, by reason and by rule,  
 We try to bend the will ;  
 For none but in the Saviour's school  
 Can learn the heav'nly skill.

Since at his feet my soul has sat,  
 His gracious words to hear ;  
 Contented with my present state,  
 I cast on him my care.

'Thus I, who once my wretched days  
 In vain repinings spent,  
 Taught in my Saviour's school of grace,  
 Have learn'd to be content.

*Newton.*

## HYMN XXXIX. C. M.

*The Persevering Christian.*

**REJOICE**, believer, in the Lord,  
 Who makes your cause his own ;  
 The hope that's built upon his word  
 Can ne'er be overthrown.

Though many foes beset your road,  
 And feeble is your arm,  
 Your life is hid with Christ in God,  
 Beyond the reach of harm.

Weak as you are, you shall not faint,  
 Or fainting shall not die ;  
 Jesus the strength of ev'ry saint,  
 Will aid you from on high.

Though sometimes unperceiv'd by sense,  
 Faith sees him always near,  
 A guide, a glory, a defence ;  
 Then what have you to fear ?

As surely as he overcame,  
 And triumph'd once for you,  
 So surely you that love his name  
 Shall triumph in him too.

*Newton.*

### HYMN XL. C. M.

*The Saviour's Resolution to drink his Cup.*

THE Lord, our Lord, how rich his grace !  
 What stores of sov'reign love  
 For humble souls that seek his face,  
 And to his foot-stool move !

He pleads the cause of all his saints,  
 When foes against them rise ;  
 He listens to their sad complaints,  
 And wipes their streaming eyes.

He takes away that dreadful cup  
 Of fury and of plagues,  
 Which justice sentenc'd them to drink,  
 And wring the bitter dregs.

He gave it to their Saviour's hand,  
 And fill'd it to the brim ;  
 Their Saviour drank the liquid death,  
 That they might live by him.

" Now take the cup of life," he cries,  
 " Where heav'nly blessings flow :  
 " Drink deep, nor fear to drain the spring,  
 " To which the draught ye owe."

We drink, and feel our life renew'd,  
 And all our woes forget :  
 We drink, till that transporting hour,  
 When we our Lord shall meet.

*Doddridge.*

## HYMN XLI. P. M.

*Sacred Arithmetic.*

GREAT Father of eternity,  
 Whose lofty throne is fix'd on high,  
 Thrice holy is thy name ;  
 Thou dost not change, nor can'st decay,  
 The same to-day as yesterday,  
 And evermore the same !

But every thing beneath the skies  
 Swift as the passing meteor flies,  
 That quick eludes the gaze ;  
 So boundest thou the years of man  
 Within a narrow fleeting span,  
 And numberest his days.

Thou hast decreed our mortal state,  
 But hidden, in thy wisdom great,  
 The period from our eye,  
 That we might not on time presume,  
 Nor brood with horror o'er the tomb,  
 But live prepar'd to die.

But numb'ring not our days aright,  
 We only count them by their flight,  
 And value their decline ;  
 Then teach us, Lord to reckon so,  
 Their value and their use to know,  
 With scholarship divine.

Our added days may we so cast  
 As to subtract the number past,  
 And learn how few remain ;  
 And the remainder so divide,  
 That wisely ev'ry part apply'd,  
 May bring us right again.

Instruct us how, before we die,  
 In ev'ry grace to multiply,  
 And ev'ry sin reduce ;  
 To copy ev'ry sacred rule,  
 And study well in wisdom's school  
 To bring these rules to use.



Thus may we ev'ry passing year  
 Keep our account of conscience clear,  
 And happily receive,  
 That we as fast as time can pace,  
 Are growing rich in ev'ry grace,  
 Each year and day we live.

G. M.

# HYMN XLII. L. M.

*Dry Bones.*

LOOK down, O Lord, with pitying eye ;  
 See Adam's race in ruin lie ;  
 Sin spreads its trophies o'er the ground,  
 And scatters slaughter'd heaps around.

And can these mould'ring corpses live ?  
 And can these perish'd bones revive ?  
 That, mighty God, to thee is known ;  
 That wondrous work is all thy own.

Thy ministers are sent in vain  
 To prophesy upon the slain ;  
 In vain they call, in vain they cry,  
 Till thine Almighty aid is nigh.

But if thy Spirit deign to breathe,  
 Life spreads through all the realms of death,  
 Dry bones obey thy pow'rful voice ;  
 They move, they waken, they rejoice.

So when thy trumpet's awful sound  
 Shall shake the heav'ns, and rend the ground,  
 Dead saints shall from their tombs arise,  
 And spring to life beyond the skies.

*Doddridge.*

# HYMN XLIII. P. M.

*Christ the Bearer of his People.*

SURELY Christ thy griefs hath borne ;  
 Weeping soul, no longer mourn !  
 View him bleeding on the tree,  
 Pouring out his life for thee :  
 There thy ev'ry sin he bore,  
 Weeping souls, lament no more.

All thy crimes on him were laid :  
 See, upon his blameless head,  
 Wrath its utmost vengeance pours,  
 Due to my offence and yours :  
 Wounded in our stead he is ;  
 Bruis'd for our iniquities.

Weary sinner, keep thine eyes  
 On th' atoning sacrifice :  
 There th' incarnate Deity  
 Number'd with transgressors see ;  
 There his Father's absence mourns ;  
 Nail'd and bruise'd, and crown'd with thorns.

Cast thy guilty soul on him ;  
 Find him mighty to redeem ;  
 At his feet thy burden lay ;  
 Look thy doubts and cares away :  
 Now by faith, the Son embrace,  
 Plead his promise, trust his grace.

Lord, thy arm must be reveal'd,  
 Ere I can by faith be heal'd :  
 Since I scarce can look to thee,  
 Cast a gracious eye on me ;  
 At thy feet myself I lay,  
 Shine, O shine my fears away !

#### HYMN XLIV. C. M.

*The good Man.*

**H**APPY the man, whose cautious steps  
 Still keep the golden mein ;  
 Whose life, by wisdom's rules well form'd,  
 Declares a conscience clean.

Not of himself he highly thinks,  
 Nor acts the boaster's part ;  
 His modest tongue the language speaks  
 Of his still humbler heart.

What blessings bounteous heaven bestows,  
 He takes with thankful heart :  
 With temperance he eats and drinks,  
 And gives the poor a part.

To sect or party his large soul  
 Disdains to be confin'd :  
 The good he loves of every name,  
 And prays for all mankind.

Pure is his zeal, the offspring fair  
 Of truth and heavenly love :  
 The bigot's rage can never dwell  
 Where rests the peaceful dove.

Not on the world his heart is set,  
 His treasure is above :  
 Nothing beneath the sovereign GOOD  
 Can claim his highest love.

*Needham.*

## HYMN XLV. C. M.

*Consolation for the Distressed.*

COME, O my soul, with all thy care,  
 And cast it on thy God ;  
 He knows thine each distressing fear,  
 And will sustain thy load.

His gracious word invites thee nigh  
 With all thy weighty grief ;  
 He will attend thy mournful cry,  
 And send thee quick relief.

Weak as thou art, approach his throne,  
 Nor doubt of aid divine ;  
 He makes thy sorrows all his own,  
 And all his blessings thine.

Encourag'd by thy promise, Lord,  
 I venture near thy seat ;  
 O, hear my cry, fulfil thy word,  
 Nor spurn me from thy feet.

Remove the burden which I bring,  
 The pond'rous load I bear,  
 That I may tune my lips to sing  
 Of thine indulgent care.

## HYMN XLVI. P. M.

*Christ a Testator.*

**I** ET others boast their ancient line,  
 In long succession great,  
 In the proud list let heroes shine,  
 And monarchs swell the state :  
 Descended from the King of kings,  
 Each saint a nobler title sings.

Pronounce me, gracious God, *thy Son*,  
 Own me an heir divine ;  
 I'll pity princes one the throne  
 When I can call thee mine ;  
 Sceptres and crowns unenvied rise,  
 And lose their lustre in mine eyes.

Content, obscure I pass my days,  
 To all I meet unknown,  
 And wait till thou thy child shalt raise,  
 And seat me near thy throne :  
 No name, no honours here I crave,  
 Well pleas'd with those beyond the grave.

Jesus, my elder brother, lives,  
 With him I too shall reign,  
 Nor sin, nor death, while he survives,  
 Shall make the promise vain ;  
 In him my title stands secure,  
 And shall while endless years endure.

When he in robes divinely bright  
 Shall once again appear,  
 Thou too, my soul, shalt shine in light,  
 And his full image bear ;  
 Enough !—I wait th' appointed day ;  
 Bless'd Saviour, haste, and come away.

*Cruttenden.*

## HYMN XLVII. C. M.

*Forgiveness of Injuries.*

JESUS, cement our hearts as one,  
 And bury all complaints ;  
 May naught divide us from thyself,  
 Or from thy honour'd saints.

O may we feel the flame of love  
 In ev'ry bosom burn ;  
 Rejoice with those that do rejoice,  
 And mourn with those that mourn.

Lord, may our souls for ever be  
 To evil tempers dead ;  
 Make us more gentle, meek, and mild,  
 More like our glorious Head.

Never may haughty, furious words  
 Our honour'd lips defile ;  
 Contention we would ne'er promote,  
 But strive to reconcile.

Long suff'ring, courteous, loving, kind,  
 We ever wish to be,  
 Just like the lovely, patient Lamb,  
 That died on Calv'ry's tree.

Then at the great and awful day,  
 When Jesus shall appear,  
 We, as his saints, shall stand approv'd,  
 Without a rising fear.

*Burnham.*

## HYMN XLVIII. C. M.

*Advantages of Death.*

HOW truly bless'd are all the dead,  
 Who in the Saviour die ;  
 From ev'ry sorrow they are freed,  
 And sing above the sky.



There Jesu's beauties they survey,  
 And all his glory prove ;  
 See him in full resplendency,  
 With all the forms of love.

Now, Lord, to thee we look by faith,  
 To thy dear arms we fly ;  
 Give us a vict'ry over death,  
 And make us long to die.

Then to thy blissful courts above  
 Our longing Spirits raise ;  
 Inflam'd with all the fire of love,  
 We'll burst in songs of praise.

Praise be to thee who came to save ;  
 Our Lamb for sinners slain ;  
 Perfume the chambers of the grave,  
 And make grim death our gain.

G. M.

#### HYMN XLIX. L. M.

##### *The Unchangeableness of Christ.*

WITH transport, Lord, our lips proclaim  
 Th' immortal honours of thy name ;  
 Assembled round our Saviour's throne,  
 We make his ceaseless glories known.

High on his Father's royal seat  
 Our Jesus shone divinely great,  
 Ere Adam's clay with life was warm'd,  
 Or Gabriel's nobler spirit form'd.

Through all succeeding ages He  
 The same hath been, the same shall be ;  
 Immortal radiance gilds his head,  
 While stars and suns wax old and fade.

The same his pow'r his flock to guard,  
 The same his bounty to reward ;  
 The same his faithfulness and love  
 To saints on earth, and saints above.

Let nature change, and sink and die ;  
Jesus shall raise his chosen high,  
And fix them near his stable throne,  
In glory changeless as his own.

*Doddridge.*

HYMN L. C. M.

*Winter.*

**S**TERN winter throws his icy chains,  
Encircling nature round :  
How bleak, how comfortless the plains,  
Late with gay verdure crown'd !

The sun withdraws his vital beams,  
And light and warmth depart,  
And, drooping, lifeless nature seems,  
An emblem of my heart.

My heart, where mental winter reigns,  
In night's dark mantle clad,  
Confin'd in cold inactive chains,  
How desolate and sad !

Return, O blissful Sun, and bring  
Thy soul reviving ray ;  
This mental winter shall be spring,  
This darkness cheerful day.

O happy state, divine abode,  
Where spring eternal reigns ;  
And perfect day, the smiles of God,  
Fills all the heavenly plains.

Great Source of light, thy beams display,  
My drooping joys restore,  
And guide me to the seats of day,  
Where winter frowns no more.

*Steele.*

## HYMN LI. C. M.

*The pure Language.*

FATHER of mercies, in thy word  
 What endless glory shines !  
 For ever be thy name ador'd  
 For these celestial lines.

Here the fair tree of knowledge grows,  
 And yields a rich repast ;  
 Sublimar sweets than nature knows  
 Invite the longing taste.

O may these heavenly pages be  
 My ever dear delight ;  
 And still new beauties may I see,  
 And still increasing light.

Divine Instructor, gracious Lord,  
 Be thou for ever near ;  
 Teach me to love thy sacred word,  
 And view my Saviour there.

*Steele.*

## HYMN LII. C. M.

*Memorial of Divine Beneficence.*

ALMIGHTY Father, gracious Lord,  
 Kind guardian of my days,  
 Thy mercies let my heart record  
 In songs of grateful praise.

In life's first dawn my tender frame  
 Was thy indulgent care,  
 Long e'er I could pronounce thy name,  
 Or breathe the infant prayer.

Around my path what dangers rose !  
 What snares spread all my road !  
 No pow'r could guard me from my foes,  
 But my preserver, God.

How many blessings round me shone,  
Where'er I turn'd my eye ;  
How many past, almost unknown,  
Or unregarded by.

Each rolling year new favours brought  
From thy exhaustless store ;  
But ah ! in vain, my labouring thought  
Would count thy mercies o'er.

While sweet reflection, through my days,  
'Thy bounteous hand would trace ;  
Still dearer blessings claim thy praise,  
The blessings of thy grace.

Yes, I adore thee, gracious Lord,  
For favours more divine ;  
That I have known thy sacred word,  
Where all thy glories shine.

Lord, when this mortal frame decays,  
And every weakness dies,  
Complete the wonders of thy grace,  
And raise me to the skies.

Then shall my joyful powers unite,  
In more exalted lays,  
And join the happy sons of light  
In everlasting praise.

*Steele.*

THE END.



















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